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Contents

The Week 155

Editorials

Twin Villain—Tax on Capital Gains..... 157
The President and the New Depression..... 158
Trophy 159

General Articles

A Yip from the Doghouse....William Allen White 160
The Affair of the Hooded Men....Henry Lefebvre 162
For Peace and Democracy.....Robert Morss Lovett 164
Growth among the Ruins.....Kenneth Burke 165
Confusion (verse).....Louise Saunders 166
Shoot the Works.....Heywood Broun 167
Washington Notes.....T. R. B. 168
Other People's Money.....John T. Flynn 169
Two from the Novel.....Stark Young 170
Home Truths from Abroad.....Otis Ferguson 171
The Bandwagon..... 172

Correspondence 172

Books in Review

Fun into Fundamentals.....Fred Rodell 175
Surveyor's Report.....Nathaniel Peffer 175
The Architectural Highway....Henry S. Churchill 176
A Way of Life.....Robert Morss Lovett 176
Washington Dateline.....Jonathan Mitchell 177
Bad Cess to You, Tom Moore.....Michael Sayers 178
Light of Israel.....Harry Thornton Moore 179
Art and Gift.....Otis Ferguson 180

The A. F. of L. Deadlocks with the CIO

When the CIO was formed, the argument of the A. F. of L. against granting it scope was that it was a minority in the labor movement; now the principal obstacle in the minds of the conservative leaders seems to be that it is, or will soon become, a majority. The discussions between President Green and Chairman Lewis, broken off without result, hinged mainly on the question whether all the CIO unions were to be admitted to the A. F. of L. with full voting rights before agreements on jurisdictional disputes were reached in all the areas of controversy. Mr. Green was willing to admit a number of unions whose dominance of their fields is substantially unchallenged, but wished to exclude the rest until piecemeal settlements had been made. Mr. Lewis refused to desert any of the unions in the Committee, and insisted that they should come into the A. F. of L. in a body. It is a foregone conclusion that a number of the proposed separate negotiations between competing unions would be deadlocked, and that final decisions must be made by higher authorities. If the conservatives, through their voting strength, retain control of the A. F. of L., these decisions would be unfavorable to the CIO unions in question, but if the CIO group after admission controls the A. F. of L. conventions and officers, the decisions would be likely to run the other way. In essence, Mr. Green's position is now, therefore, that a minority must rule.

The European Minuet

The weary minuet of the powers in Europe has continued without any important new developments during the week since our last issue went to press. Following the Anglo-French conversations in London, the French Foreign Minister, Yvon Delbos, departed on a fence-repairing tour of Eastern Europe, in the course of which he will endeavor to renew the slackening bonds between France and the Little Entente. Officially, the contents of the conversations between Hitler and Viscount Halifax, spokesman for the pro-German element in the British Cabinet, are still a secret. It is believed, however, that Hitler wants both restoration of the German colonies and a free hand in Central Europe. His demand for restoration of the colonies he is willing to postpone a few years, but this is not true of his desire to annex Austria and to set up a dummy autonomous regime in the German-speaking provinces of Czechoslovakia. It may be taken for granted that Britain has reassured France regarding her continued friendliness and the unlikelihood that London will make a triangle out of the Rome-Berlin axis. It may be taken for granted, too, that France has found these reassurances far from satisfactory. Meanwhile, European diplomacy seems to be marking time in the expectation that decisive military developments may be seen in Spain and China.

Labor versus Hague

Two significant news items have come recently from New Jersey. The first is concerned with the strong-arm tactics Mayor Frank Hague is employing to drive CIO union organizers from his city. On November 29 the Jersey City police, acting under orders from Hague, arrested thirteen union members, organizers and sympathizers for violating a city ordinance forbidding the distribution of circulars without a police permit. The arrests, of course, are a part of the vicious anti-union campaign that

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Hague, backed by the members of his twenty-five-year-old political machine, has been directing in Jersey City. The second news item is the announcement that delegates of 164 unions throughout the state have united in forming a New Jersey division of the American Labor Party. In the preamble to the resolution creating the party specific mention is made of the corrupt rule of the Hague-and-Hoffman-dominated Democratic and Republican Parties and of the reign of terror that the political leaders of the state have used to fight the progress of union organization. News of the American Labor Party of New Jersey is encouraging to the thousands who have suffered under the Hoffman-Hague rule. It will give the citizens of the state a chance to vote for a slate of candidates free from allegiance to the old political machine—the first time in at least two decades that a real choice has been offered them.

Miners' Demands

The National Labor Relations Board's hearings on charges brought by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers against two local companies in the tri-state area of Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma bring to light an interesting point. The companies have, during the past two years, refused to bargain collectively with the union, but the issue involved has not been primarily hours, wages or union recognition. The stumbling block has been the companies' refusal to adopt a program of health precautions that seems completely desirable. For example, in the matter of accident prevention, the union asks that the men be lowered and raised in the mine shafts on equipment that is safe, that the hoisting buckets not be loaded beyond the limits prescribed by the state laws and that miners need not work in places where the roof has not been declared sound by a qualified roof "trimmer." Similar necessary regulations are asked to prevent lead poisoning (a lunch period of an hour to give the miners time to wash) and silicosis. The regulations demanded appear so basic that it is shocking to think the union has fought a losing battle for two years to have them adopted. When management is unable or unwilling to look after such primary concerns as these, it can have no justifiable complaint about the government's interfering with its affairs.

Facts on Neutrality

Most people who have been discussing the problem of staying out of war—including the government of the United States—have taken little trouble to inform themselves in detail concerning what a feasible neutrality policy would imply. Simple assertions that we will never fight again are countered with other simple assertions that we cannot possibly stay out of a world war. The National Economic and Social Planning Association has stepped into this breach with a careful report based on long study by a committee of economists, legal authorities, business men and government experts, which makes at least a good beginning in revealing the necessary technical information concerning how non-participation might be safeguarded and what the costs would be. Members of the Committee at the beginning agreed to disagree about whether in principle a policy of collective security or of isolation ought to be followed, but to concentrate their attention upon the means and burdens of a neutrality policy, assuming that that is what the nation wants. From the report arising from their discussions it may be concluded that it is possible to stay out of war if we want to take the necessary measures, that these measures are difficult and costly, but that they are far less difficult and costly, and certainly less dangerous politically, than participation in war would be. The chief obstacle is that the costs of neutrality have to be assumed in advance and deliberately, whereas the costs of war are never reckoned until the war is over.

The report, which is published in the November-December issue of Plan Age, is called the Maintenance of Neutrality. The Committee, which was in two sections, one in New York under the chairmanship of George Soule of The New Republic and the other in Washington under the chairmanship of A. F. Hinrichs, Chief Economist of the Department of Labor, included N. R. Danielian, Federal Communications Commission; J. Frederic Dewhurst, Twentieth Century Fund; Arthur D. Gayer, Columbia University; Philip C. Jessup, Columbia University; Oswald W. Knauth, Associated Dry Goods Corporation; Arthur M. Lamport, A. M. Lamport and Company; Raymond T. Rich, Raymond T. Rich Associates; Horace Taylor, Columbia University; Louis Bean, Department of Agriculture; Thomas Blaisdell, Social Security Board; E. J. Coil and George B. Galloway, National Economic and Social Planning Association; Roy Veatch, Department of State; and Benjamin B. Wallace, United States Tariff Commission. Other experts were consulted from time to time.

Where Homage Is Due

Time and time again there has been trouble in the United States over the requirement that our school children must salute the flag. There have been expulsions, heated words and editorials of outraged patriotic sentiment. Such a flurry came up with the refusal, two years ago, of the children of Walter Gobitis, a grocer who lives in Minersville, Pennsylvania, to salute the flag in their schoolroom because they belong to the religious sect of Jehovah's Witnesses which holds that such action is idolatry. The children were expelled and Mr. Gobitis sued the school authorities in the lower courts, where he lost. He appealed to the Federal District Court. Recently his case was heard and Judge Albert B. Maris handed down a decision that the children could not be forced to salute the flag since it constituted a violation of their religious convictions. There is a principle of common good sense behind the ruling that goes even deeper: that loyalty to one's flag and one's

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country cannot be obtained through legislative statute. No school child is imbued with patriotic devotion by the act of raising his right hand. Love of one's country and calisthenics are quite different functions and a government capable of confusing the two may not be worthy of the devotion it seeks. The sort of allegiance worth having goes automatically to that government which serves well the needs of its citizens.

Galloping Dominoes

They have the solution in Manila. The International Stock Exchange there was raided by the police last week and seven traders arrested for gambling because, the police explained, the gold-share market was so inactive that the young traders had turned their talents to shooting dice. We don't see why the men on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange shouldn't take the tip from Manila and (with a little more care about police raids) banish all their troubles. The more we think about the idea the better we like it. The Manila Plan is good for everybody. It's good for the Wall Street boys because they can stop worrying about the SEC and what President Roosevelt is going to do to them next. It will be good for their figures because you can't shoot craps without kneeling on the floor and you can't kneel on the floor all day long, six days a week, without becoming lithe and slim. It will be good for the country because nobody will care any longer about who's winning and who's losing. Fat chance there will be of convincing anyone that the dice game is influencing investment one way or another. All the pages of the newspapers that are now devoted to stock-market reports can be turned over to printing the news, or, if that proves impractical, can be left blank as a handy place for memoranda. The market tickers can be used for cheese storage and the tape can be kept fresh and clean for parade use exclusively. And the Exchange building will do beautifully, with minor alterations, for an indoor parking lot. All hail, the Manila Plan!

News Notes of a Week

Japanese troops reached the gates of Nanking during the week ending December 7, and at least the first phase of the war seemed closing. The next phase is guerilla warfare to harass the Japanese and wear down their resources. Venal Chinese leaders may be expected to yield to Japanese bribes and influence. . . . In Spain, the deadline of December 5, mentioned in Franco's recent ultimatum, came and went without the promised offensive, while Loyalist fliers bombarded his troop concentrations. . . . Soviet Russia prepared for her first popular election by secret ballot. In very few districts was there more than one candidate for any office, and the secrecy of the ballot was compromised by the invitation, given in the press, for voters to sign their names. . . . Mexico struggled with the task of completing the socialization of her National Railway System, which will be operated by the government until such time as it can be handed over to the workers. . . . In Jugoslavia, Mickey Mouse was in trouble. A daily-newspaper cartoon strip, dealing with his adventures, was deemed by the Belgrade police to have political significance, and was suppressed. A New York Times correspondent was threatened with deportation for reporting this incident.

At home, Congress wrestled with the wages-and-hours and farm bills. Early tests of sentiment on the farm measure indicated opposition in the House to compulsory control. . . . The government moved to prosecute the two chief telegraph companies on charges of monopoly. . . . The extraordinary feud between Mayor LaGuardia of New York City and the federal housing authorities continued, and seemed to threaten the public-housing program in the nation's metropolis. . . . Congress, in spite of all the appeals for economy, voted to itself its customary graft—round-trip traveling expenses for the special session at the rate of 20 cents a mile.

Twin Villain—
Tax on Capital Gains

LAST WEEK The New Republic discussed the agitation for repeal of the surplus-profits tax. But another tax to which the financial community is even more strongly opposed, and is trying to get repealed by scaring Congress about the present recession, is the tax on capital gains. This tax, its opponents maintain, deprives those with extra money of an incentive for investing, and so contributes to the lack of new construction and the slump in the industries making capital goods.

It is well to remember that we have had the capital-gains tax with us for many years—that it has been a regular part of the income-tax system and has not prevented previous revivals. The first time it was called dramatically to public attention was when an investigation revealed that Mr. J. P. Morgan had paid no income tax for 1931 and 1932, his capital losses, which the law then allowed to be used as an offset, having more than canceled his taxable net income. Certain revisions were thereafter made in the tax to limit the use of losses in just this way. But from the present outcry against it, one might think that the tax was a New Deal measure, invented by Mr. Roosevelt's brain-trusters to ruin the country.

Great Britain has no tax on capital gains, and her example in this respect is often praised by those who would scream with terror at any suggestion to adopt her otherwise high rates. A theoretical case can be made out for not taxing capital gains, if one thinks only of the investor proper, or the individual saver who may make an occasional lucky sale of capital assets. In these cases, the taxpayer is concerned chiefly with the income from his holdings. If there is an appreciation in the value of his capital, the assumption is that his income will rise correspond-

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ingly, and the tax-gatherer will benefit in consequence over a long period. It may be unfair to penalize a man for selling his property at a profit, when he does so infrequently, does not make his living by stock-trading and presumably will invest his gain in something else.

The tax, however, is necessary to tap the incomes of those whose chief business is buying and selling stock or gambling in other forms of capital. Such people may receive salaries or dividends, but they depend much less on the yield of their holdings than they do on the speculative gains they may acquire through shifting of capital values. If there were no tax on capital gains, such speculators would have an unfair advantage in comparison with those who buy and sell groceries or shoes or other ordinary commodities, although they perform a less useful service—if, indeed, the net result of their activities is serviceable at all.

The present agitation against the tax probably derives most of its fervor from a relatively small group of highly interested persons. These persons accumulated securities at the low levels of the depression. They have been holding their stocks to sell at the higher prices of prosperity. (The present market slump, they know, will not last forever.) It is estimated by some close observers that there are several thousands of millions of dollars of speculative profits to be collected when the sales are made. If the capital-gains tax can only be repealed before the holdings are sold, the men who had resources enough to profit in this way can make an immensely larger killing, and the tax receipts of the government will be correspondingly reduced. It is merely a question whether the government gets the tax money or they do. Such an interest can stimulate a lot of propaganda and influence many Congressmen.

Is there any merit at all in the argument that the "freezing" of these profits restricts new capital investment? It is argued that once the sales were made and the profits realized, they would be reinvested in industry and thus stimulate the production of capital goods. Maybe. But it is a more likely guess that such a big windfall would be salted safely away in tax-exempt government bonds. And anyway, why could not those who are expected to buy when the insiders unload furnish just as much capital for new enterprises as the insiders themselves? Finally, it may be predicted with some assurance that the holders would sell anyway, if they were certain that the tax would not be repealed. What freezes their potential profit is not the tax, but the hope of getting rid of it.

An ordinary investor is not likely to pass up a good chance to invest his savings in a profitable enterprise just because he knows that if he ever sells his stock or bonds at a higher value he will have to pay a tax on his gain. The present agitation is, essentially, an attempt by big speculators to hold up the government. And their gun probably isn't even loaded.

The President and the New Depression

FOR A month or more, Washington dispatches have been concerned with the old familiar question whether Mr. Roosevelt has turned sharply to the Right. A few of his loyal supporters insist he has not; that he is only waiting for the swing of public opinion to be exerted against Congress, before going on with his New Deal policies. But against this interpretation, a large amount of evidence is beginning to pile up.

The President has authorized the statement that he would "probably" veto any bill putting a heavy new strain on the Treasury. He has indicated his belief that $500,000,000 annually should be the outside limit for expenditures under the new farm bill. He has held conferences with two important public-utility men; the character of these discussions is not known, but the purpose was to find a practicable compromise between public and private power interests so that the latter would resume expenditures for new construction. There are ominous reports that the taxes on undivided corporate surplus and on capital gains may be sharply modified or even repealed.

Most disturbing of all are the stories that the President proposes a cut of at least $800,000,000 in the budget. Federal funds for relief would be reduced from $1,500,000,000 by one-third, to $1,000,000,000, despite the fact that everyone who knows anything about it says even the larger figure is much too small. The CCC, which earns its way more completely than almost any other New Deal agency, would be curtailed from $350,000,000 to $275,000,000. Although the country is desperately underequipped with modern automobile highways, a fact that is costing us thousands of lives annually, federal funds for road building would be cut in two, from $250,000,000 to $125,000,000. Other budgetary items would also be reduced.

These proposals are made in the face of a "recession" which can now fairly be called a new depression. The New York Times index of business has dropped from 110 points to 85, canceling all the gains made since 1935. Stock-market values have been reduced, the experts guess, by $30,000,000,000. Unemployment is rapidly increasing throughout the country. Retail sales have fallen off so alarmingly that numerous merchants are preparing to throw their stocks on the market below cost, if necessary, in order to move them. Attendance at the movies has declined between 10 and 20 percent in a year. Steel operations are down to less than 30 percent of capacity. Car loadings are down about 20 percent. Automobile production is not much more than one-half of what it was a year ago.

Ironically enough, many of the wealthy conservatives who have in the past been scolding President Roosevelt for spending too much money have

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now begun to reproach him for parsimony. They had expected that Congress would put the screws on the President and make him behave in more conservative fashion; and behold, the President is more conservative, in their sense of the word, than the National Legislature, whose members are left to fight for the New Deal against its own father. The capitalists, of course, don't really know what they want; or rather, they want an impossible return to an impossible golden yesterday when they could do as they pleased and the sky was the limit. Some of them recognize, however, that large federal expenditures have been an important part of such prosperity as the country has seen up to last spring. They are shrewd enough to associate the present slump with the sharp curtailment of federal spending that began early in the summer. Now they would like to see the spending program increased again, even though they would doubtless continue to grumble at the President if he acceded to their desires.

In any case, they are right. "Confidence" on the part of business men is a hundred times less important than money in the pocket of the average citizen with which to buy. President Roosevelt understood this in 1933 and '34 and '35. If he has now forgotten the lesson, it must be taught him again. Particularly must he recall that there are still millions of unemployed, that their numbers are increasing, that the states and cities long ago demonstrated their inability to cope with the problem and that the federal government must do it, if people are not to starve.

Trophy

MICHIGAN has been kind to its hunters and anglers. New Jersey keeps its heavily fished streams full of trout. But we doubt that any other state has done quite so well as Pennsylvania in the matter of preserving and propagating wild life. There are townships just outside of Philadelphia where game birds are almost as plentiful as in the rice swamps of South Carolina. There are coal-mining communities where more and bigger deer are killed than in parts of the Maine woods. There are streams where more trout are caught than in the famous Snake River.

The hunters themselves pay for the program. There were 525,000 of them in 1936, and each one bought a license for $2. There were also 8,000 out-of-state hunters who paid higher fees, and there were 150,000 farmers who, with their immediate families, could hunt on their own land without buying a license. All the license revenue was expended by the game commission. It paid for breeding game (pheasants, partridge, rabbits, wild turkeys); it paid for maintaining more than half a million acres of game preserves, and for 184 sizable game refuges where hunting is strictly forbidden. It also paid for game protectors and for a school where each of them is given a year's training. And it paid the costs of a new plan under which the farmer, in return for leasing his hunting rights to the game commission for a period of at least five years, has a safety zone placed around his building, has several little game refuges established on his land, and is remunerated for any grain he leaves standing for game food.

The Pennsylvania fish commission gets its revenue from 325,000 fishermen. It has an even more difficult problem than the game commission, because 80,000 out of the 100,000 miles of stream in the Commonwealth are polluted to some degree by mine or industrial waste. But there are ten fish hatcheries in the state, and they keep the good streams heavily stocked with trout, bass, pike, and even with minnows to feed the bigger fish.

But the point of all this ambitious effort is that it really has made a change in Pennsylvania ways of living and thinking. On the first day of the 1937 deer season, one of our editors happened to be in a Pennsylvania village on a business trip. He could transact no business for the simple reason that the village was deserted. The store was empty, the sawmill was closed; every able-bodied male from sixteen to sixty was out in the woods. The same village had a Rod and Gun Club that helped to enforce the law. But it did not tamely follow the game commission—last spring when the commissioner announced an open season on does, the village came near rising in armed revolt, and was pacified only when the does were protected by a court injunction. That was an example of coöperative democracy in action. We have heard a lot of talk about coöperation and collectivism—entirely too much of it—from people so individualistic that they can't even get along with their neighbors or their wives, let alone with such larger groups as the Proletariat. Pennsylvania, in its fish and game policy, offers a modest example of collectivism that works—even among hardshell Republican farmers.

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A Yip from the Doghouse

THESE lines are written because they have been lying heavily on my chest for a long time, say five or six years, and I asked The New Republic to print them. The title also is of my own wording. I seem to represent, or at least feel I speak for, a group of neolithic liberals who once inhabited these lands and had a place of some power and prestige before the coming of the great Ice Age, and now all that we stood for, our whole ideology and dialectic, is rejected and we are in the doghouse and we know it.

That I may define my crime, let me identify us as those liberals who for a quarter of a century before 1932 believed that if we could change the environment of the underprivileged, give them better housing, better wages with which they could buy better food and better clothes, educate their children in better schools, afford them decent amusement and profitable diversion, we would approximately solve the problem of poverty. We used to think that maybe if we could arrange a social order in which the differences in social reward would be reflected in the differences in social and economic capacity to serve society we would have done something really worth while. Our whole plan of social salvation was to cherish and deepen human self-respect.

The thing we were trying to do from the days of the first Roosevelt and during the dark years that followed Wilson, through Harding, to Hoover, was to brace up the human spirit in those social and economic areas where class differences were cruelly marked and wickedly depressed. But it was the human spirit that we were tinkering with. As an incident of our problem of course we sought to improve the environment. We were environmentalists as a means to an end. The end was "the pearl of great price"—a phrase, by the way, hanging over from the nineties when our forebears were Christian socialists. By working as liberals who were called progressives in the elder Roosevelt's day we remained in the two old parties. There we have held a balance of power in Congress and most of the legislatures for a generation. Most of the whole body of our national legislation in these thirty years has been fairly forward-moving. But tariff bills were all bad because the log-rolling legislative process made it possible for conservatives to unite easily.

No one can claim that we achieved a revolutionary objective. I think it is fair to say, however, that we did gain a little nationally in the struggle with the possessive and acquisitive forces that more or less dominated the prosperity of the first three decades of the century. Part of the gain came through political action; part of it through public opinion, which moved through rancor those who labored and created the wealth of this country to demand larger rewards. The same public opinion probably shamed the acquisitive forces somewhat and they felt it was smarter to be just than it was to be too greedy. This same public opinion, liberal public opinion, if you will, which worked in politics to maintain a balance of power, worked in commerce and industry to bring about a rather wider distribution of things in America than was manifest in other countries. This distribution of things fooled us. We thought that some way a formula of progress could be found hidden in the workings of our prosperity. That folly got us off on the wrong track.

We forgot our objective, which was the human spirit. We began to think that the whole trick could be done by distributing toothpaste, automobiles, radios, bathtubs, parks, playgrounds, high schools, libraries, extension courses and canned soups to those who hitherto had been denied these sweet boons.

So when the great ice sheet came in the early part of the fourth decade and millions of men and women were hungry and cold, we old neolithic liberals were out. They sent us to the doghouse, and here we are. We still believe that it is the spirit we are seeking to benefit and enlarge. We still believe that the quest for justice cannot be achieved by force. We are confused, bedeviled, bewildered, at strong-arm methods. We are shocked at the sit-down strike; we are sick at heart at the revelations of the La Follette committee; we hate the tyrannies of fascism and the Nazis; we are nauseated at the Soviet executions. At home we loathe Tom Girdler and distrust the class-conscious appeal of the one big union. We know theoretically that the principle of the CIO is right. It must come to that in the end. But we are a bit white-livered and don't like to see it come to that by coercion and the labor racketeer.

To us here in the doghouse of desuetude, liberals who believe in a step-at-a-time inching toward Utopia by the evolutionary process all under the orderly form of democratic government, the devil seems to be walking abroad whacking our ideals with a club. We are willing to admit that our scheme of things, unless it is modified, won't work. The gradual enlargement of the human spirit by improving human environment won't work with ten million men and women probably permanently out of work in a system that requires a body of permanently idle workers if free experiment is permitted in our industrial life. But on the other hand, neither will things work, with the proletarian elbow in the middle-class rib jabbing the daylights out of the bourgeoisie.

Laws ought to do something. But what laws?

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We are all agreed that there should be a basic minimum standard of living below which no family should be allowed to fall. Both Landon and Roosevelt talked about that last year and many of us liberals thought that the difference between what Landon would do and Roosevelt would do in the matter of political achievement you could put in your eye. For after all neither Landon nor Roosevelt could go faster than the march of the middle class. We liberals are acutely conscious that the middle class generally elects the mayor and always elects the sheriff. In nine cases out of ten the Governor comes from the middle class and is affected by its ideals. Mayors, sheriffs and Governors control the machine gun, and whether Roosevelt was elected or Landon was elected the machine gun in the hands of the middle class would certainly come out just as surely and just as swiftly if the labor question was to be settled by force, if it was to be a matter of class-conscious struggle. And what happened last spring? The police club, tear gas, the machine gun appeared just about as quickly after the cellophane-encased revolution of November, 1936, as these middle-class first aids to law and order would have appeared with Landon in the White House. The fundamental working political formula of the old-fashioned liberal is the bitter knowledge that no President of this country is ever going to go far out of line from the ideals of the middle class.

So the class-conscious solution, which is an appeal to force under the proletarian dialectic, looks rather hopeless to us. The middle class has the President —any President. It also pretty well controls Congress. So when it comes to writing the law which shall guarantee a legal minimum standard of living, it seems almost to be an insurmountable task. Take a look at the Black-Connery wages-and-hours bill in Congress. Who wants it as it is? Obviously, labor is divided on the subject. Middle-class opinion is foggy about the proposed bill. Who can change it so that it will be generally acceptable? And yet we at the west end of the clothesline, we liberals in the doghouse, aren't much wiser here than the leaders of the second Rooseveltian revolution.

The Rooseveltians thought they had a monolithic party of 27,000,000 voters, which ought to be able to do anything. What they had was sixteen, seventeen million office-hungry, victory-loving party Democrats who would have been just as hungry and just as happy under Jack Garner. With these Democrats were five or six million earnest, honest, radical working people. Two or three million Negroes; five or six million farmers and the unemployed. The monolith cracked with a resounding pop when the President started his Court fight. A lot of victory-loving Democrats, having achieved their victory, weren't interested in his control of the judiciary. When the President said "a plague on both your houses" a large chip cracked off the monolith on the Left, leaving a spawl bigger than a bone! The thing wouldn't hold together. It wouldn't hold together largely because it was heavily weighted in the middle by the middle class, which same is true of America. America is heavily weighted by the middle class. If you appeal to the ballot box, the esteemed M.C. has a majority. If you appeal to the machine gun, Democratic Mayor Kelly of Chicago has a machine gun and so have Roosevelt's two little altar boys, the Democratic Governors of Pennsylvania and Ohio. And did they use the guns? More than that, the middle class has the tidy capacity for organization, a tradition of coherence in time of danger, and a solidarity based somewhat upon the strength of property actual or prospective, which will turn it fascist overnight—and dirty.

The only party that can operate under a mandate backed by dependable force and not relying on reason and the will of God is a middle-class party. Franklin Roosevelt's tall talk of a personal mandate was a mere rhetorical figure. Mandate as what? Party leader? Mayor Kelly's? Pat Harrison's? John Lewis'? Father Divine's? Tom Pendergast's? The Farm Bureau's mandate?—the cat's foot. F.D.R. had the same mandate as the foreman on the Tower of Babel. The President has a mandate to go just as far as he can persuade the conservatives and liberals of his party to get together and march. Hoover, who grumbled often at the Western progressives, had the same mandate that Roosevelt has, and what did it buy him? In the same sentence insert the names of Coolidge, Harding, Wilson, Taft, Theodore Roosevelt and Grover Cleveland and it reads the same. It always will read the same in this generation. And chiefly because of the political recalcitrance of what my congressional friends call the Boorgoosey. The middle class demands two middle-class parties, plutocratically supported, in which it can safely make snoots at the rich.

And yet it was to the middle class and to the middle-class people we neolithic liberals of the first third of the century appealed. We had an iridescent dream of a liberal party which should oppose a conservative party. But it always aborted. It is no nearer now than it was in the days of the Grangers and the Greenbackers, no nearer than it was in the days of Bryan and the Populists, and it is as evanescent as it was when we fought for it with Theodore Roosevelt at Armageddon. Why? Somewhat because of election laws; somewhat by reason of the Electoral College. But the two-party system persists because the middle class refuses to think politically in economic terms. It is for property rights "one and indivisible now and forever!" It can be wheedled, coaxed, shamed, evangelized or scared into justice. That was our job as liberals. But it cannot be bluffed or badgered. It won't vote with any party with a real united front for social and industrial justice. Yet justice marches on slowly. We were going good from McKinley to Franklin, the all-smartest, but not fast.

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All right, suppose our tactics erected a treadmill getting nowhere, just about keeping up with the aggressions of a growing class-conscious plutocracy. But the net gain of a neolithic liberalism was a keen sense of the plutocracy in the heart of the middle class.

Probably we accomplished something more than setting up a danger signal under the leadership of the first Roosevelt, of Wilson, of La Follette, of George Norris, of the farm bloc and of the nonpartisan progressive group in Congress. Heaven knows there isn't much to brag about, and look where it landed us. But as a matter of real politics, of a workable policy for the establishment of justice on this continent with things as they are, what else is there to do but to trudge along the old road? It is easy enough to kick up a row, but then what? Where will force get you? Did it get far in France —farther than in England under the evolutionary process? We old-fashioned progressives, who believe first that government may be used as an agency of human welfare and second that public opinion outside of government, if it congeals solidly, is irresistible in government or in business, still feel that we had something. It was not a cure-all. But it worked: sometimes impotently, often it fumbled. We and our old-fashioned blunderbuss are discarded. We know it. So on behalf of the outmoded, despised and rejected old dodos I throw out these nails, hard, steel nails of irritating doubt for you to gnaw on. Enjoy yourselves.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE.

The Affair of the Hooded Men

FOR A LONG time the French press of the Left—particularly the Communist Humanité —kept denouncing the secret preparations of the Fascists. Sometimes very precise evidence was furnished. Among many other things, it has been proved that the active traffic in arms at the Basque frontier has recently changed its direction. Until six months ago the French Fascists were sending arms to Franco. For the last six months they were receiving arms from him. Also at the other French borders a constant smuggling of arms has been observed.

Public opinion grew accustomed to these revelations. When the Association of the Cagoulards—the "Hooded Men"—was discovered some weeks ago, the Rightist press insisted that they were but an insignificant group of young people playing at "conspiracies." There was a tendency not to take them seriously. It is true that the explosions in Paris at Toussus le Noble (one destroyed the seat of the Employers' Federation; the other, several military planes) created a stir, but they were ascribed to individual terrorists. A few Italian anarchists, accused of being in the pay of Mussolini, were arrested, and nothing else was done. The police also failed to throw light on another mystery: the disappearance and assassination of several secret agents of the Cagoulards.

The recently discovered CSAR (Committee for Revolutionary Action) definitely established the existence of a vast plot covering the whole territory of France. Since the search for arms has begun, they are being found at every corner: on roads, in woods, rivers—the Fascists are trying to get rid of compromising evidence. Entire arsenals have been unearthed. In a suburban villa at Rueil the police found a completely equipped fortress with concrete cellars, blockhouses, subterranean galleries, automatic doors, and even a torture chamber ready to receive prisoners. In a Paris antique shop near the Place de l'Odéon, forty-five German machine guns were discovered in a basement, with munitions for several hundred men. A boarding house in the Rue Ribéra provided storage for 100,000 cartridges, sixteen machine guns, 400 hand grenades, 50 kilograms of high explosives; 14 anti-tank guns were found in the Rue Beausire; and several trucks were required to remove a vast stock of hand grenades that had been kept in a building belonging to the reactionary municipality of Villemomble, near Paris. Many other depots were found in the provinces. It is believed that in strategically important centers, like Marseilles and Toulouse, the secret committee had several thousand adherents with arms sufficient to equip them all.

Even more disquieting was the discovery of nearly two hundred clandestine radio stations placed near railway centers and airports. All France was covered by a network of these stations, and many of them are still undetected. Official wires were tapped at important telephone exchanges.

The conspiracy was organized on a strictly military basis. There was a general staff, liaison officers, an ambulance service, a secret police, etc. A rigid hierarchy comprised regional leaders, battalion commanders, companies, cells. Passive and absolute obedience was required from ordinary members who knew only their local chiefs. And the question on everybody's lips is: who are the national heads of this conspiracy against the Republic? Until now it does not seem that the police has laid hands on them, although some of the arrested personalities are important enough, *e.g.*, General Duseigneur, of the air force, and M. Moreau de la Meuse, who is on the board of several metallurgical and textile corporations in the East and has numerous connections in leading capitalist circles. But a conspiracy so carefully organized could not have existed without a political leader-

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ship, and there is a widespread certitude that at its head were well known French politicians who acted in agreement with emissaries from Hitler or Mussolini.

Who are these *political* chiefs? In order to answer that all-important question, it is necessary, being given the strange and sudden discretion of the French police, to proceed by inference. There is a remarkable synchronism between the affair of the Hooded Men and the recent libel suit instituted by de la Rocque against some of his former associates. The Fascist chieftain, after having promised his troops to conquer power by a coup d'état, renounced his original plan, and instead proposed to follow a "legal" way. With this end in view he organized the French Social Party. However, some of his lieutenants and backers disagreed, and under the leadership of Doriot formed the "Front of Liberty." After de la Rocque refused to join the latter, thus creating an uncomfortable dissension within the Fascist ranks, he was compromised in court by one of the most dangerous French reactionaries, André Tardieu, who testified under oath that, as Premier, he had supported de la Rocque with monthly payments from the secret State funds. It is significant that Tardieu's return to the political scene follows a three years' stay on the French Riviera, near the Italian border. Doriot's connections with the Hitlerites are well known. The machine guns come from Germany; the high explosives from Italy. (It is also true that another stock of explosives has been traced directly to the French army.) The conclusion is probable that the political heads of the conspiracy are Tardieu and Doriot, and that they regrouped the Fascist forces, after having dissuaded them from following the legalistic strategy of de la Rocque.

The plotters intended to start the uprising by a series of terroristic acts, which were to be ascribed to the Communists, following the famous example of the Reichstag fire. Then all good citizens would have been called to rally against the alleged revolutionary danger. The very day the arms were discovered, the German press printed news about "troubles" in France, and predicted an imminent "national" reaction. A few days earlier, the Ministry of the Interior was compelled to issue an official communiqué denying rumors of a Communist *Putsch*. All this shows that the uprising was planned at an early date. It is also noteworthy that recent articles in Hitler's press announced Germany's intention to act toward France just as she had acted towards Spain—that is, in the event of a civil war, Germany would have applied that strict non-intervention policy which consists in helping the Fascists with arms, "volunteers" and money.

According to the official version, the clue of the discovery of the plot was furnished by some cartridges that had accidentally fallen out of a truck going from the Swiss border to Paris. The owner of this truck was subsequently arrested and his home searched, which led to the finding of arms. But this story is hardly credible. Pozzo di Borgo, one of the defendants in the de la Rocque trials, charges that de la Rocque "gave away" the conspiracy in order to take revenge for Tardieu's disclosures. What is certain is that the police know much more than they admit. Tardieu's influence in the administration is still very powerful and paralyzes decisive action. There are also good reasons for believing that the Chautemps Cabinet is indulging in a subtle parliamentary game. Information on the progress of the inquiry is given out with the greatest parsimony, and it is obvious that the government is interested not so much in dealing a crushing blow to the enemy as in influencing Parliament and public opinion. Thus, the first revelations about the Hooded Men were made at the moment of the cantonal elections. The disclosures about the arms depots and the Committee for Revolutionary Action came during the debates on the financial problem; and they certainly help to explain why, in these debates, the Center abstained, instead of voting against the government. It is true that these strategic moments were also chosen by the terrorists in order to create a panic, but this does not excuse the government for continuing to shield the political nucleus of the conspiracy.

This petty finessing may still cost us dearly. Politically it is the expression of the traditional democratic leniency towards enemies from the Right. Even under Blum, and despite vigorous Communist pressure, no decisive measures were taken against reaction; the Fascists were checked but not destroyed. Still less can be expected from the more "moderate" Chautemps Cabinet. In Spain, only a few weeks before the military rebellion, the Republican government dismissed officers who had tried to organize anti-Fascist groups, on the ground that politics was forbidden in the army. In France, a year and a half after the spectacular victory of the Left, working-class newspapers are forbidden in the barracks, while the Rightist press is enjoying unrestricted circulation. And there is no doubt that this political attitude greatly helps the Fascists. However, in order to understand the real reasons for their hopes of attaining power, one must go deeper.

During recent months, the French economic situation has been growing steadily worse. Blum's social reforms were followed by a brief period of optimism and much was expected from the increased purchasing power of the masses. But an increase in production did not materialize. Although nominal wages went up from 15 to 20 percent, production increased only by 3 percent. The Rightist press lays this lag to the diminished output of the worker and agitates for the revocation of the shortened working week. In reality, the big trusts and the banks sabotaged the economic efforts of the Blum regime by exporting their capital instead of investing it in new machinery and expanded plants, and thus contributed to the pressure on the franc

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emanating from London. Today, after devaluation, the trusts enjoy super-profits, while the cost of living has gone up by 30 to 40 percent. Real wages have sunk below pre-Popular Front levels, and small business finds it difficult to cope with the 40-hour week. Doriot's demagogic slogans and his "Front of Liberty" are expressly designed to impress the small business man, whose economic distress they ascribe to the "socializing" policies of the People's Front.

It is true that until now Doriot has not succeeded; the results of the recent cantonal elections prove that the population still stands solidly behind the People's Front, and, in particular, the Radical Socialist voters clearly expressed their unwillingness to enter into any pacts with the Right. But in the meantime monopoly capital is allowed to thrive; it has already won certain concessions and is continuing to hold the Fascist card as a reserve. The plot of the Hooded Men has been foiled by "Republican vigilance," but so long as the basic causes are not removed and the real culprits are free to maneuver behind the scenes, the danger is not over.

Paris. HENRI LEFEBVRE.

For Peace and Democracy

THE American League Against War and Fascism held its fourth congress at Pittsburgh, November 26-28. In spite of the denial of the Syrian Mosque as a place of meeting, at the insistence of the Americanization Department of the American Legion, and the picketing of the gathering by the Catholic Radical Alliance under the direction of the priests, the congress was the most successful yet held. The number of delegates was 1,320, representing 806 organizations from 26 states. A striking revelation appeared of the growth of the League among trade unions, of which 332 were represented by 405 delegates.

The mass meeting on the evening of November 26 drew between six and seven thousand people to Duquesne Garden. Speeches were made by Doctor Fernando de los Rios, Spanish Ambassador to the United States, by Ferdinand L. Kerran of the British Labor Party, who described as an eyewitness the bombing of the hospitals at Shanghai and Nanking by the Japanese, by Doctor Ch'ao Ting Chi, editor of Amerasia, by John Vesecky of Salina, Kansas, president of the Farmers' Union, by Arthur Ciccone of the A. F. of L. and William Goddard of the CIO. The sentiment of the meeting was sympathetic to the victims of aggression, Spain and China; and the general opinion in respect to international policy was apparently expressed by Professor Reinhold Niebuhr, who declared: "The only way America can stay out of war is to stop war." The ovation of the meeting was given to Congressman J. J. O'Connell of Montana, who referred to his experience of passing through the picket line to enter the hall:

> I am a Catholic. I bow in no way in my Catholicism to any man or woman on that picket line, and I say to them that there is nothing in our religion which prohibits me from opposing fascism and opposing war.
>
> I say to any Catholic who might attack me for standing here tonight upholding the cause of democracy in Spain that I am equally as justified in opposing Fascist terror in that land as I was last summer in opposing Tom Girdler and his anti-labor forces in the United States.

Two significant actions of the Congress were the change in name to the American League for Peace and Democracy and the acceptance of the withdrawal of the Communist Party from affiliation. The original invitation of the League to all progressive parties to become adherents was accepted only in the case of the Communist Party, a fact that gave a certain color to the false statement that the League was controlled by Communists and directed from Moscow. The Communists have given invaluable aid to the League in promoting peace and democracy, and will doubtless continue, as individuals, to do so even when the program of the League in respect to the main objectives differs in detail from that of their party.

The promulgation of this program is doubtless the chief source of public interest in the Congress. The League recognized that it faces a situation in which the forces of democracy throughout the world as well as in this country are involved in a desperate struggle against an old foe with a new face and name. It aims to unite these forces, in the name of peace both among nations and among classes, and accordingly it adopted a broad statement of principles:

"To protect and extend democratic rights for all sections of the American people," and

"To keep the United States out of war, and help keep war out of the world."

A further clarifying sentence was added:

"It is understood that these basic principles are to be worked out in action with particular concern for those minority groups most restricted in their democratic rights and in coöperation with the peace forces of the world."

The development of the program for 1938 in respect to democratic rights offered little difficulty. The Congress met in the central city of the region which was the scene of the conflict last spring between the CIO and the independent steel companies. Early in October the League instituted hearings in Pittsburgh before a panel of citizens, at which sixteen representatives from eight cities testified to the activity of vigilantes in helping to break

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the strike, either by open violence or economic pressure. These vigilantes were sometimes recruited by companies as special police, sometimes as *ad hoc* citizens' committees for law and order. The complacent attitude of duly constituted authorities, federal, state and municipal, toward this violence affords a sinister parallel to the weakness of constitutional governments in Italy and Germany which permitted the initial rise of the Fascists and the Nazis. Vigilantism shows itself clearly in America as incipient fascism. Accordingly the League proposes to organize citizens' committees for the protection of the rights of labor. It also undertakes to combat measures to compel the incorporation of unions, or the inspection of their finances by outside agencies; to work for an anti-lynching law and guarantees for the full rights of the Negro people and the foreign born; and to urge the defeat of the plans of the War Department to conscript labor and industry and to regiment press and radio.

In respect to peace the Congress faced several difficulties. It recognized that an elementary objective was to keep the United States out of war, if for no other reason than that a declaration of war means the immediate assumption of powers by government which will in effect convert the country into a fascist state.

It recognized also, however, that continued aggression by the fascist states threatens the security of all democratic nations, and it held that the United States should go as far as possible in concert with other powers in imposing economic sanctions upon aggression and granting economic aid to victims. Accordingly the Congress advocated a foreign policy based on:

The distinction between the aggressors and victims.

The necessity of denying our economic resources to the war-making, treaty-breaking aggressors and opening them up to victims under conditions designed to remove the risk of our being drawn into war.

The necessity of concerted action to quarantine aggressors.

In a situation subject to change from day to day it was felt to be inadvisable to adopt a series of rules and regulations designed to be permanent. One such article of policy the Congress voted: "To support the nationalization of the manufacture of arms, forbidding export except when ordered by Congress in cases of countries invaded by an aggressor." In view of the misapplication of the present so-called neutrality legislation in the case of Spain, and its non-application in the case of China and Japan, the Congress recommended a return to the *status quo ante,* "by removing restrictions on the access of the governments of China and Spain to our markets, under regulations in regard to purchases and shipments designed to remove the risk of our becoming involved in war." In addition the Congress favored a people's boycott of Japanese goods.

In spite of differences of opinion in matters of detail and emphasis the Congress unanimously adopted the program sketched above, as a platform upon which supporters of democracy and peace can unite. The new constitution provides for a large national committee representing all sections of the country, and for the meeting of this committee to take specific action in view of future emergencies.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Growth among the Ruins

THOSE who believe that history-in-the-making is only what comes over the wires, for front-page headlines, are advised to read no farther in this article. For I would here salute a happening of a deeper, more solemn order. This happening concerns the processes of history, after they have been strained through the consciousness of a sensitive, imaginative and resourceful artist. I refer, in brief, to Peter Blume's new painting, "The Eternal City," now on exhibit at the Julien Levy galleries, in New York City.

For those who have not seen the reports in the press, revealing the excitement of both esthetic and political cast the picture has aroused, I might record the fact that this is not merely a one-man exhibit, but a one-picture exhibit, comprising one large canvas and six drawings of details made preparatory to work on the ensemble. The oil is thus composed of many remarkably executed miniatures, each an event in itself, but all brought within a larger frame of reference. The picture is the result of nearly four years' concentrated application. It has subtleties of pigment and draughtsmanship, and solidities of architectural construction that are purely visual experiences, beyond the reach of verbal description. Blume knows how to flood his canvas in a strange light. And all such qualities one could not verbalize with any greater justice than one could verbalize the taste of an orange.

I shall here discuss only the material in Blume's new work that does lend itself to verbalizing. To label bluntly: we might call "The Eternal City" the painting of a surrealist, turned social propagandist. But one must hasten to modify. It does not trifle with enigmas, as so much of surrealism does. And, as propaganda, it extends its range until a total personality is encompassed; the propagandist element merely takes its place as one function in a broad texture of consciousness, having much more scope and complexity than the artist could possibly include if he conceived of propaganda as a purely utilitarian act (to "sell" this policy as against that policy).

To suggest the quality of the total texture, I propose as subtitle: "Growth among the Ruins." In the scattered bits of architectural fragments, vestiges of different styles and periods, surviving in various stages of decomposition, we see the clutter and accumulation of past ages. And out of this a strikingly ambivalent *vita nuova* is emerging. There is "growth" in two senses: there is malign growth, in

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the repulsive head of Mussolini, a salient popping-forth across the picture like a Jack-in-the-bandbox with spring released. And for benign growth, there is a stately and calmly assertive tree. The head and the tree (a "tree of life"?) are at once linked and divided: for both are done in green—the one green benign, and the other malign.

The tree and Mussolini, on the right, are countered on the left by a different lineage. We see an agonizing Christ, crucified with honors (the wrong honors—mainly gifts of wealth and military symbols). Perhaps he even bears a literal cross, in the swords crossed upon his knees. Beneath him is an alms box—and lower in the picture is a beggar woman, soliciting alms, *degraded* with poverty.

Seen from another angle: the picture may be divided roughly like a medieval stage. In the foreground is the pit (hell), with its two plotting figures (racketeer and gangster, summarizing perhaps "crimes of cunning" and "crimes of violence"). These figures are *active;* their faces reveal *intention;* their placing on the canvas puts them under the aegis of Mussolini, who is himself springing from pit sources. There are other figures, moving to emerge from this pit to the level of earth—a level on which a peculiar kind of panic is taking place. People confront soldiers agonizingly; while two Cossack-like soldiers, mounted, are allowing women to slip beneath the bellies of their horses. This panic is obviously, in "dream-logic," associated with the one popping eye of Mussolini, who casts a spell of "evil eye" upon the scene. In the background, you reach the "heavenly" level: remote mountains rise on the left, while houses of an unpeopled city (tomblike, suggesting a "city of the dead") are banked against the slope of a nearer mountain on the right. We should also note in the immediate foreground, raised above the level of the pit, the marble replicas of two lovers, in sexual embrace, and broken into fragments. It is on one of these fragments that the artist signs his name, in letters like carving on a tomb.

The state of panic in the central drama suggests action at cross purposes, an agitation not "organized," but balked. In the foreground, sniffing tentatively at the broken statuary, is a dog, "spectator" of this breakage (a breakage that none the less perpetuates a point of crisis). And on a balcony there is an American tourist viewing the central drama (the clash between people and soldiers) with a *collector's* interest (it is a grotesque touch: this inadequacy of her response, as she squints through a lorgnette, lest she miss anything, whereas one knows that she could not possibly fail to miss it all). Meyer Schapiro called to my attention how much of such perception-at-one-remove there is in this picture, notably in the many miniatures of art-objects, while the tourist is observing the central upheaval itself as though it were a picture.

When I say that "The Eternal City" is "propaganda-plus," I have in mind the complex way in which political meanings have been fused with other elements, religious, sexual and naturalistic. A psychoanalyst might even omit the political elements altogether, with revealing and relevant results. The Mussolini head could be easily treated as a menacing kind of super-ego in phallic guise (an invitation censorially rephrased as a "thou shalt not") surveying the scene with an evil eye that blasts, causing disintegration and petrifaction of the lovers and leading to the midway state of panic. And the author's choice of bogeyman is certainly drawn from a deep childhood level of experience, since it is in early childhood that we first learn to be jarred and fascinated by the sudden leer of such a puppet, leaping from his dark box.

The possible interconnections are endless; for there is "dream-logic" in this painting, as well as conscious ideology, and the interaction of the two is what gives it its depth and scope. If you draw a diagonal line from upper left to lower right, for instance, you will find that above this line all is in brightness (buildings, mountains, the central scene, the tree, and the salient head); below the line there is darkness, even in some areas double darkness, except for a focus of illumination about the figure of Christ. Here are the pit, the fragmentary lovers and the beggar-woman. All beneath the diagonal seems to symbolize an out-of-which; above the diagonal, an into-which.

Is it not "history" too ("basic" history) that there is, in this picture, no human figure of benignity? The Christ and beggar woman are outraged; even the man and woman in devotional posture in the shadows are bringing no elevated attitude, but only *some* of their concerns. There are the beautiful, unpeopled, tomblike buildings, the austere mountains, the ruddy earthen light and the tree—but there is no corresponding *human* vessel of such elements. Is this depersonalization of the benign inevitable, after so many centuries intelligently spent upon the questioning of human motives? So that, for us, benignity is not in the smith, but in the spreading tree beneath which the smithy stands.

KENNETH BURKE.

Confusion

Believe there is no access to delight,
Nor any tunnel hollowed in the clay:
And, cleave we to their left or to our right,
We foolishly arrive or lose our way.
Could we be sure what singing brought release
Or know which radiance were the rising sun,
Glad would we sing and think not once of peace,
Spending our strength—though die when we have done.
But choice is vain; all endings blank. For he,
Who strives with prayer to spin a cloak of love,
May leave harsh blazoned hate for heraldry.
And those who delve below can end above.
So this confusion at fate's massive feet
As waves against the solid rocks compete!

LOUISE SAUNDERS.

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Shoot the Works

Men of Not So Good Will—Humanitarians Needn't Apologize—Radicals and Tories —No Faith Without Works

A TECHNICAL objection is the first refuge of a scoundrel. Having indulged in a generalization I must proceed at once to take part of it back. Obviously a good purpose may be ill served by a bad law and it is not unreasonable for legislators to try and frame measures that will work effectively.

However, I do not agree with the notion that all progressive action must be suspended until the one-hundred-percent statute has been found. And there are publicists and politicians who are always voicing their support for certain objectives in theory but never in fact. The most damaging opposition to the abolition of child labor has come from those who insist that they bleed for the suffering of young toilers but that the method of relief suggested is not the right way.

Sincerity has never seemed to me one of the most vital virtues. It all demands what you are sincere about. And so I will readily grant that some members of this group may mean well. But many don't mean well at all. Ten thousand different measures for the abolition of child labor could be brought up and they would pick flaws in each and every one of them.

Continued delay and complete opposition are twins not to be distinguished save by the ribbons in their hair. Progressives will do well to take Luke XI, 23, for a text— "He that is not with me is against me."

The same sort of negative support obstructs any kind of anti-lynching legislation, or wages-and-hours bill. Of course, all those who oppose present available measures deplore lynching and long hours and low pay, but they insist upon solutions which are arduous and nebulous and not even in the present picture. These are the jam-tomorrow progressives and they will never agree with any remedy which is timed for today.

In so far as these spokesmen consent to become definite and articulate as to the sort of thing they would support, it boils down to some watchful sort of waiting for the backward states to catch up with those which have made greater advances. It is always easier to be patient when the rope is not around your own neck.

Nor will these advocates of a slow evolutionary development admit the palpable fact that the reluctant communities do more than slow up progress. They actually inspire rapid retreats. Communities which bid for cheap labor and assure employers that they will see that it remains cheap tear down the whole structure. We know that far from winning the fight against child labor, the present set-up has encouraged a retrogressive movement.

The good will of certain individuals is less than enough against the pressure of economic advantage. And anyhow I doubt damnably the honest intent of those who are all against evils but carry in the palm of the right hand a nullifying "But."

I deny that most of these men and women have a right to assert that they are actuated by good will, for I believe that true humanitarianism has been unjustly discounted and that the one who can prove he has a burning concern should not be scorned even though he cannot produce a pat program for every problem.

By now it is probably too late to insist that the word "liberal" should be something other than an insult. The true liberals who find themselves living under a label which has lost repute must blame themselves in part. They made the entrance requirements too low.

But I still feel that something should be done for the word "humanitarian" before it too goes down the drain. A man whose first animating influence toward progressive action is a genuine sympathy for the underprivileged should not be made to feel ashamed.

If he never gets beyond the stage of running around in circles and saying, "Something must be done," I am ready to grant that his usefulness in the social scheme will never be very great. But even a muddled emotion may bring a recruit into an understanding of practical programs. There ought to be more than one entrance to any church.

In the beginning the radicals themselves were pretty top-lofty in saying, "Oh he's just a sentimental Socialist." Surely it is better to be an emotional radical than a sentimental Fascist. Jack Reed did not come into the fight for a new world wholly on any program of required reading. He felt the need of change in his very bones. Eugene V. Debs had his romantic side as a labor leader and John L. Lewis has been known to quote Shakespearean verse with great emotion when it suits his purpose and his mood.

Unless I am much mistaken, radical groups are now far more friendly than they used to be toward those whose only qualification as recruits is that they are men and women of good intent. Indeed by now it is the conservative forces that have switched tactics.

Once I used to read that they fought all radical ideas because they were conceived in hate. But now I find stern-visaged practical persons complaining that their enemies are feeble folk actuated wholly by visionary ideas built around impossible concepts of human brotherhood.

The reactionary will be just as hostile to the missionary who approaches him with a smile and a tract as he is to those who frankly offer to punch him in the nose. There seems to be no pleasing these people.

Thus I find Sinclair Lewis quoting with great gusto the statement of Fred Beal that Mike Gold "is a sentimental revolutionist." It has never seemed to me that Gold was particularly sentimental, but ever. if the accusation could be driven home one-hundred-percent I would still feel that any avenue of escape from Bourbonism was better than remaining mired in heartless indifference.

Theologians still quarrel as to the respective merits of faith and works. I never could quite understand how any sharp dividing line was possible. Work without faith is all but impossible and when a faith grows confident enough it inevitably transfers itself into deeds.

If mankind is to march to better things I see no reason why there should be complaint if happy warriors walk arm in arm with those who wear a fighting face. That is as long as both boys "are members of this club" and heading in a common direction.

HEYWOOD BROUN.

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Washington Notes

Strafing Straus—Mayor LaGuardia Takes a Hand —Why Make Low-Cost Housing the Victim? —Advice to Whom It May Concern

A CAMPAIGN is in progress to prevent the confirmation by the Senate of Mr. Nathan Straus, administrator of the new United States Housing Authority. Its most active leader seems to be an official of the old PWA housing division, which the new Authority supplants. Since Mr. Straus is an old friend of Mr. Roosevelt, and has the backing of Senator Wagner, the Senate is hardly likely to reject him. Ordinarily, the intrigue against Mr. Straus would not be worth mentioning.

But it happens that Mayor LaGuardia, who is rightfully looked to as a leader by third-party groups over the country, has lately mixed in the fight. He has accused Mr. Straus of star-gazing, has said that "one can't move families into blueprints," and a good deal more from the same spigot. Last week he promised to "get rough—damn rough" with Mr. Straus's organization. Still worse, Mr. John L. Lewis has undertaken to throw a few half-bricks in Mr. Straus's direction. The CIO is not actively opposing Mr. Straus's confirmation, but its leaders appear to be hostile.

Since government-built, low-cost housing, if it is ever to succeed, needs the support of third-party groups and organized labor, all this is bad. This department has endeavored to explore some of the current plots and counter-plots. They stretch from Washington cocktail society to left-wing unions, and traverse the White House vestibule. A large part of the anti-Straus propaganda seems incredibly infantile. For example, a responsible official is peddling the story that Mr. Straus has brought department-store methods into government (members of Mr. Straus's family are department-store owners), tyrannically ordering all the girls in the Housing Authority to wear black and refrain from rouge. This particular myth I can deny of my own knowledge. One day last week, in Mr. Straus's office, one of his assistants wore green, while a second wore a little number in red and white, with tasseled effects. They used rouge also.

Two more serious charges, however, are made against Mr. Straus. Back in 1933, he sponsored a limited-dividend housing project under PWA auspices. The housing was constructed on land which Mr. Straus owned, in the Bronx, New York City. He did not turn over all of the property to the limited-dividend corporation, but retained a strip fronting on the Boston Post Road that was suitable for business purposes. In the New York State campaign of 1934, Mayor LaGuardia's belligerent park commissioner, Mr. Robert Moses, tried to blow this transaction up into a political scandal. Secret charges have been filed against Mr. Straus with the Senate Committee on Labor, and it is understood they concern the Bronx limited-dividend project. A hearing will be held on them before Mr. Straus's name is reported to the Senate.

Friends of Mr. Straus greatly resent this attack upon him. They say that the strip on the Boston Post Road was separated from the remainder of the tract on the insistence of impartial experts, who felt it would be suicidal to mingle a low-cost-housing experiment with a speculative business development. They say that Mr. Straus had little or no part in the final decision. I have had the transaction explained to me in detail, and am entirely convinced of Mr. Straus's disinterestedness.

The second charge is that Mr. Straus's sole official act in the five weeks since his appointment has been to turn back Jane Addams House, and two other PWA projects in Chicago, to the Chicago Housing Authority. The anti-Strausites regard this as a crime of unparalleled magnitude. Miss Addams was a great and noble woman who spent her life fighting for municipal rectitude, they say, and here this man Straus has turned over the project dedicated to her to the Nash-Kelly machine. The pro-Strausites answer that he is bound, under the law, to surrender all PWA projects. Furthermore, the Chicago Housing Authority is not a cog in the Nash-Kelly machine, but an admirable group of responsible housing enthusiasts.

Of the remaining corpus of anti and pro-Straus propaganda, there is space to mention only two bits. The legend has been widely spread that Mr. Straus was a contributor to Mr. Jerry Mahoney's campaign fund in the recent New York election. This is partly to exhibit Mr. Straus as a reactionary, partly to explain Mr. LaGuardia's present irritation. Friends of Mr. Straus, however, privately deny this, saying that, on the countrary, a member of Mr. Straus's family was perhaps the largest single contributor of Mr. LaGuardia's. Campaign contributions should not create obligations, I know; nevertheless this fact—which unquestionably is a fact—casts an odd light on Mr. LaGuardia's "rough—damn-rough" explosion.

It is also pointed out that Mr. Straus has chosen as his administrative assistant Mr. J. Austin Latimer, until lately the right-hand man of Mr. James A. Farley. Here I think that anti-Strausites have Mr. Straus by the short hairs. I yield to none in my affection for Mr. Farley. But to turn Mr. Farley loose in an agency that will need to fight as many, and as desperate, battles as the Housing Authority will have to fight, seems to me bad medicine. The Straus faction pooh-poohs criticism of Mr. Latimer. They point out that Mr. Straus's own appointments have been excellent. In Mr. Leon Keyserling, Mr. Warren Vinton and Miss Catherine Bauer, Mr. Straus has three of the most devoted, most energetic, wisest housing experts of this generation. They further point out that the majority of the personnel is being taken directly from the old PWA housing division. How, then, can Mr. Latimer do harm? Maybe so. But this department has watched the demoralization of too many New Deal agencies to be convinced.

The Straus partisans, with great bitterness, blame Mr. Ickes for the present campaign. Just before he left on Mr. Roosevelt's fishing trip, an associate of Mr. Ickes asked him point-blank whether he meant to oppose Mr. Straus's confirmation. Mr. Ickes is said to have replied that he did not propose "to lift a hand." I am prepared to believe this without reservation. It should be said that Mr. Straus, on his side, has shown neither concern nor rancor. The row is entirely between volunteer friends of the two.

Beginning with the fabulous fight between Mr. Ickes and Mr. Robert David Kohn in 1933, I have seen low-cost housing get off to no less than four false starts. Part of the trouble has come from pressure from unholy real-estate interests; some at least has come from the hair-pulling, arm-

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pinching and face-slapping of the low-cost-housing advocates themselves. If I might offer unsolicited advice, I would propose to Mr. LaGuardia and Mr. Lewis that they hold their fire until Mr. Straus does something patently and indisputably wrong. To Mr. Ickes, I would propose that he not merely not lift a hand against Mr. Straus, but actively intervene to call off the hounds of the Interior Department now baying at Mr. Straus's heels. To the Straus partisans, I suggest that they stop making public faces at Mr. Ickes. And not to rest too heavily in Mr. Farley's bosom.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Tragi-comedy Without Music—John Wesley Hanes proposed for the SEC—a Few Objections to Such an Appointment

THE ONLY thing that is now lacking to make the New Deal complete is music by Gilbert and Sullivan. The comedy has all the appearances now of approaching its end. We can see the intricate plot of enmities, mistaken identities, feuds slowly clearing up. It looks as if the author is getting ready to bring it to an end with one of those great musical-comedy finales when everybody is getting married to somebody, everybody falling on one another's neck. We are arrived at the scene where the President names a member of the Board of Governors of the Stock Exchange as a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission to regulate the Stock Exchange. Only a few moments ago Mr. Gay was throwing bricks through the window of the SEC. Now the President is naming one of Gay's close friends on the Board on a commission to regulate Mr. Gay. Surely the curtain is ready to go down. Next Wendell Wilkie will be put on the Power Commission; W. S. Gifford will be named a member of the Communications Commission; old Leonor F. Loree will be appointed on the ICC; a Morgan partner will be put on the Federal Trade Commission, the President will kiss the Chief Justice on the whiskers, the revolution will be pronounced officially at an end and the curtain will fall, with the Southern Senators leading Corcoran and Cohen off in chains and the chorus of unemployed singing "Hoover Days Are Here Again."

When I was told that the President was going to appoint Mr. John Wesley Hanes, a stock broker and a member of the Board of the Stock Exchange, to the SEC I did not believe it. If I had been told that Hoover or Coolidge contemplated such a thing I would not have believed it. They would not have dared, and every Democrat in the land would have chorused up a savage denunciation of it. That Roosevelt would do it was unthinkable. For with him it is not merely a shocking appointment, but worse, a shocking precedent. If the Senate confirms that appointment, I shall know the end has come.

I have been told that the appointment is being made because the Commission itself wants around some man who has a technical knowledge of the market. I do not believe that. I will never believe that until the Commissioners themselves tell me so. And so far as needing men around able to give the necessary technical advice—the Commission from its inception has been crawling with ex-Wall Street professionals.

The man now proposed is Mr. John Wesley Hanes. And his appointment is a perfect example of the manner in which little seeds can come to fruit. In the early days of the New Deal there came into being a committee known as the Dickinson Committee. The Senate Banking Committee was nearing the end of its labors. A bill to regulate the Stock Exchange impended. Suddenly out of the Commerce Department came unheralded a committee to study the Exchange problem. The Commerce Department has nothing to do with this subject. But the subsequent conduct of the committee helped to explain this zeal. The Exchange was busy trying to influence the proposed legislation. One point it was pressing was that the Exchange should have a representative on the Commission and the other was its most essential propaganda point, namely, that security speculation is essential to financing American industry.

This committee turned up with Mr. John Dickinson as its chairman. Mr. Dickinson has been an energetic enemy of the anti-trust laws and has been closely identified with the law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell. Another member was Arthur Dean, a member of that firm. A third was Jimmy Landis, since raised to the deanship of Harvard Law School by a group of Wall Street lawyers. The other was Adolph Berle, on for window dressing. The committee, directed by Mr. Dickinson, brought in a report in which they urged that the Exchange should have a member on the Commission and that security speculation is a most essential force in financing industry. What more could the Exchange want? At the time I denounced that committee. It was a sham committee. But now we see its recommendations flower into the appointment of Mr. Hanes.

The SEC has some troublous problems before it. One of them is segregation of brokers' functions. This includes brokers acting as investment bankers, as investment-trust promoters, etc. It includes the question of brokers speculating for their own accounts. The Commission is now investigating investment trusts and must make recommendations about them. It includes a lot of other subjects in which the Exchange is vitally interested.

Mr. Hanes is disqualified from sitting on this Commission on a score of counts. He is president of an investment trust—Equity Shares, Inc. He is a director of another investment trust, Tri-Continental Corporation, which is dominated by Seligman and Company and Mr. Hanes's brokerage firm. He is a director of Case, Pomeroy and Company, which is interested as investment bankers and investment counsel in all sorts of concerns. He is a director of twenty-one corporations, some if not many of which will be before the Commission with security registrations. He is interested as investment banker in issues which will require action by the Commission.

Of course we will be told that Mr. Hanes will resign his brokerage seat and his directorships. This assurance is made to adult Americans on the principle that they are all damn fools. No public official who has the least conception of the proprieties should make such an appointment. No broker who is an honorable man should accept it.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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Two from the Novel

Of Mice and Men, by John Steinbeck. The Music Box, November 24, 1937.

Barchester Towers, adapted from Trollope's novel by Thomas Job. November 30, 1937.

MR. BROOKS ATKINSON in his Times review of the Trollope adaptation at the Music Box remarks on the difficulty of establishing on a play's brief stage the relationships of a novel's characters. This is most true, and from the fact of it there is likely to appear some recourse in the directions of emphasis, forcing the outlines, or of sharper meanings, or of sheer plot. A theatre adaptation of a novel is almost sure to be false to it one way or another, and a novel is lucky if its pressure and slant emerge at all, what with those new needs that its migration to another medium encounters. The actual hero of a novel is its tone. For lack of it good novels are scarce. And it is necessary to any final supremacy. That does not prove, however, that a play that departs from the novel may not in itself be fair enough.

"Of Mice and Men," rewritten for the stage by the author himself, follows its novel more closely than is commonly the case. There are the two men, one a defective, the other cherishing and guarding him; their story retains its character and its leading importance. The compact impression of the work as a whole is carried over from book into theatre. The single love motif is still secondary: that of the restless wife, shut off in the loneliness of the ranch, eyeing the other men while her husband is on a rampage about his husband-honor, planning at length to run away, and ironically killed by the crazy man, or freak, whatever you want to call him. There is the same projection into a kind of lurid unreality, expressed in terms of a violent realism in detail and circumstances.

How one might describe "Of Mice and Men" as we get it at the Music Box I do not know; I have never seen a play quite like it, have no previous acquaintance with the nature of its suspenses, or with the curious artistic satisfaction that its development affords. But from that last point its quality derives, I am sure of that. That is to say you never quite recognize or believe the characters or the active moments; the speech is not compelling as an actual, sharp recording out of life; the locale is not borne in on you as exactly literal, as inevitable realism, an indisputable entity. But the whole of it seems to come off right in its own kind. It remains artifice, theatre, a work of art; but it loses nothing by it. It loses nothing in compulsion, projection, mood. Good or only pretty good, it turns out to be one of the few plays these several seasons that know their own mind, though you may or may not like that mind, which is another issue entirely. The repetition of motifs is bold and insistent, as in the first scene, for instance, where three or four things are said over and over with startling assertion of sheer pattern in theme and style. The total mood of the play dominates all else; all actuality, forward movement, detailed record, character analysis, are superseded by the design that establishes this play's inner and outer force.

"Of Mice and Men" would appear by report to be drawing what is known as carriage trade, which on Times Square might mean society people and otherwise might imply a certain sophistication. There was a suggestion of this kind of audience the night I saw the play; and a part of them when things got hot seemed to be getting out of it something of the kick of the Grand Guignol; others took it as a shocker, while others took it as a picture from life, and others yet as, whatever else, vivid theatre. But the attention was remarkable. The whole play turned out to be an absorbing work of theatre art. Meanwhile it must be said that the evening might much more likely have been regarded as preposterous, to say the least, had not the way been prepared for it by such a piece as "Tobacco Road." Compared to "Tobacco Road," "Of Mice and Men" has a much less vivid, basic and promising speech—rooted English idiom, shall we say, tang of the soil, heat and authenticity of blood. It has a less genuine and far less vivid locale, and less living color and variety; and it has less of an immediate social application. It has far less bounce, gusty relish, scope and trenchant humor; and less of the outline of significant fable. Nevertheless it survives the comparison, and holds its own, in its own kind. A comparison arises also with "Little Ol' Boy," a play three or four seasons back that quickly failed but that left with those who saw it an impression of directing by Mr. Joe Losey and acting by Mr. Burgess Meredith that was unforgettable. "Of Mice and Men" is more secure, single, and as to mood more successfully calculated and stamped.

A number of the performances, for example Miss Claire Luce as the young wife, the only woman in the story, Mr. John F. Hamilton as the ranch hack, are still a bit shy of the fluency needed, but good. As one of the two friends Mr. Wallace Ford is excellent; the other, the imbecile, is played without a break, to great effect by Mr. Broderick Crawford. The extent to which the deeper implications are conveyed by these performances, so interwoven, is remarkable. The final honors of the whole performance come in reality back to the director, whose problem with such a piece was unique, crucial and highly professional all together. Mr. George Kaufman in the vast number of productions that he has directed and from which he has learned such showmanship, has plenty of times, through professional instinct, conciliatory policy or passiveness in conviction, or blur in point of view, as the case might be, cut down the impact of divers scenes or plays. He can well be proud of his result with this new play. No other director on Broadway could have taken such chances as he does here with repetitions, dangerously unexpected but excellent combinations in the dialogue, and pauses that begin as emotional crises and are made to end as triumphs in stagecraft. A curious effect of good sense and professional certainty sustains the whole performance, and keeps the sum of tragic undercurrent, tenderness and fantastic irony tangible and solid. This directing is indeed superb.

The tone, which is the essence of "Barchester Towers," is doubtless possible only to the novel form. In play form the most likely substitute for this tone would be, I suppose, what we might call point of view. As to this version, freely adapted from Trollope, that we see at the Martin Beck, under Mr. Guthrie McClintic's direction, the wonder rises as to what might save it from this impression of getting nowhere at all very much. The average London company would have resorted to charm, which is to say that where we get twelve actors we get twelve coquettes, enough co-

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quetry, self-consciousness, private vanity, archness, on the stage to lay us low. Or we might have a close, exactly observed, faithfully rendered to the last dullness or delight, version of some section of human society, locality, epoch and living—a large order for any dramatist or performance, a transcription based on long study, practice and labor. What we get with this present production is a sort of adventuress piece maybe, with a bright, sinful lady coming to work havoc in a cathedral town, *et cetera*. Not having seen Trollope, even at so remote a view and management, on the stage, I did not find the evening tedious, which it essentially is. A high-spirited house-party offering or a serious transcription, these very likely are the alternatives that might be followed in this venture. Neither appears. Nor do the people on the stage seem to enjoy themselves on the one hand, or on the other to have anything they want to convey. Inch by inch Miss Ina Claire, with her skill and wit, plays very well indeed. As a whole her portrayal does not round up into much one way or another. Mr. Mackenzie Ward, as the designing heroine's worthless, impish, engaging brother, plays to one pattern, his tongue always safe in his cheek, and carries off the plums of the evening.

The sets for "Barchester Towers" were humdrum enough on Mr. Jo Mielziner's part. It is better to remember his set for the town jail, really capital, in "Too Many Heroes," of recent, brief memory, and the priests' supper scene in "Father Malachy's Miracle," a lovely and inspired piece of homely décor if ever there was one. Mr. Donald Oenslager's settings for "Of Mice and Men"—if not always lit with inspiration—are excellent, those ranch scenes in the barn, especially the last with the bars of light falling from high overhead, realistic and stylized at once. The first scene is the best out-of-doors setting I have seen in a long time, a sort of converted realism, genuinely dramatic for the scene, and as a picture beautiful. STARK YOUNG.

Home Truths from Abroad

PAUL ROTHA, the English film man, has done a lot to solve the problem of independent film making. With John Grierson and others he has got several units under way in England, making documentary, "realistic" two and three reelers for whoever will back them. I have just seen several of the more successful ones, of which some are beautiful, some striking and some just true.

There are difficulties, for these short non-fiction films develop most easily when the subject itself is in motion and presents rudimentary conflict. All there is to do in "Housing Problems" (directed for the gas industry by Arthur Elton and Edgar Anstey), is to show the old rickety houses and the lives within them, crowded and filthy, crawling with vermin, full of the air of decay and back-stairs privies; then set this off against modern developments, built reasonably enough so that the same people can move into them, and get clean for the first time, and sit looking at the four-star luxury of a bath with running water. So this is what they do, a moderate workmanlike job which wouldn't be exciting if it weren't for the people, and the trick of interviewing them with sound-truck and camera.

And these are absolutely the most genuine people I ever saw on the screen, speaking right up in their own words and habits of phrase and no nonsense about it. There is no suggestion of pose; there is above everything a shrewd dignity that keeps them both from whining and from the pathetic little makeshifts with which men and women usually try to hide their poor condition. They are fair sick of the cramping and dirt and stink, they have fought it and never won out and it's not their fault, and they let you have it with both barrels; with cynicism and the eloquence of disgust.

Getting people like this is never accidental and the genius behind this is apparently Ruby Grierson, who got to these people and earned their confidence, smoothed away embarrassment and suspicion, singled out those with a direct voice and a natural twist of word, and worked them over until they would as soon talk to a camera as to Mrs. Flibbity on the next stoop. And that is what makes it really fine.

"Children at School" was also made for the gas industry, but simply does not come off. The old and the new again, a competent statement of a problem, but no life, no fire—even the kids are stiff. "We Live in Two Worlds" (directed by Alberto Cavalcanti for the Post Office Film Unit) falls in the same category eventually, though it has some very fine pictures of life in Switzerland, and an imaginative treatment of the boundary walls of nationalism.

My favorite among social films is Rotha's production, for the National Council of Social Service, "Today We Live" (direction credited to R. I. Grierson and R. Bond). It opens on the dead mining and industrial region in Wales and (I think) Yorkshire, a perfectly stunning sequence of still wheels and tipples, chimneys with no smoke, no motion except the advance of rust and rot. This is the true waste land, for nothing will grow in it except people, who grow sparely. So the camera goes to the people, living listless and cheap, their rough strong hands bewildered with idleness. In their homes, into their pubs, into their doled pennies.

But the idea of this film was to show how the Council is serving England socially, and of course the Council felt that its work in rehabilitation through community life was enough solution to guarantee a happy ending, the people *were* being made happy, weren't they? The producers said, "Yeah"; but to themselves. It is the implicit irony of their last section that brings it in under the wire (and it was a long struggle of conferences to do that), making it serve both the truth and the very distributing facilities that would alone make such truth available. One town gets a social center; the other a center where things can be made and mended. The people work and sing again—and supposedly the chap who keeps hanging back and objecting is just a typical sea lawyer. But in the end, as the camera shifts from activity to the great mills and mines again, gutted and silent, this chap gets the last word, the word of truth. He agrees it's better than nothing. "But *this* isn't our work," he says; "not the work we want"—and your eyes go involuntarily to the bulge in his coatsleeves and his hands, gnarled from their training, strong and good and useless.

Of all the six I saw (there was a Len Lye color oddity that was quite free and new), the one most naturally effective was "The Night Mail." You can see the possibilities at once: the Postal Special (Basil Wright and Harry Watt did this for the post office) leaves London and tears along up through England all night, coming into Glasgow in the morning. All the business of wheels and steam and the counties of England, the whistle for the crossing, the far

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sound coming nearer, the rush of iron and fire and the mailbag ripped from its patent hanger, and they're out of the sleeping town again, off up the line. The junction, engines shifted and trucks rattling to load and unload letters by the ton, men shouting and heaving and jumping around to beat the schedule. The London crew goes off here and the Glasgow shift takes over, swinging on with familiar banter. Inside the cars there is a steady business of dumping, sorting, resacking, always to beat the schedule—when they pass the first bridge, and then the second bridge, and count the beats of 95 rail-ends, then the sack for that town has to be ready and strapped, tied to its patent davit and swung out; there is a sound like a shot, the davit swings in empty, and *that* town has had its mail delivered in its sleep.

The exposition covers a hundred fascinating details, the knots used, the method of sorting, the station-master's telephone, the struggle with faulty addressing—the romance of the ordinary, "the world is so full of a number of things," etc. But there are more than the mechanics of the job; the men work as men actually do work, with deftness here, a bit of puzzlement there, with an economy of phrase and an occasional grunt, always with a little ragging, done with a nudge, a look, a knowing word. And as the crews shift and they get farther into the North, the accents thicken. Well, the mail gets to Glasgow, the post office sells us (painlessly) its bill of goods, and we have got more interest and excitement than if the Postal Special had been wrecked, robbed, and reported by Bette Davis.

Paul Rotha is trying to get something like his and Grierson's multiple-unit system working over here; and this is interesting enough to be gone into later, when I have seen the rest of the films which Rotha is now showing through the Musuem of Modern Art, and which you should start setting up a yell for locally. OTIS FERGUSON.

The Bandwagon

Mr. President, sometimes I think we ought to deal with facts rather than statistics.—*Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith, reported in The Congressional Record for November 24.*

I am an aristocrat from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. . . . A cultured high-class gentleman could no more hobnob with an uneducated hod-carrier than "a lamb could lie down with a lion." . . . Ninety percent of these people are happy in their surroundings, so why disturb them?—*"Aristo," writing a letter from Arlington, Va., to The Washington, D. C., Post.*

At a recent convention, one of the speakers, DeLoss Walker, began his discourse by passing a twenty-dollar bill out for the inspection of his audience. "All you have to do to get this twenty is to cite me a single man who ever achieved anything important working a thirty-hour week," he said. There were no takers.—*From an article in The Nation's Business.*

Al Capone is fit to sit beside me on the board of the Presbyterian church, so far as his criminal court record is concerned. He was caught with a gun over in Philadelphia and was a tax dodger. I've done both and so have you or you wouldn't have any property today.—*James Hannibal Clancy, former circuit judge in Michigan, quoted in The Bloomington, Ill., Pantagraph.*

The odd thing is citing Japan as a fascist nation while everyone knows that theoretically it is one of the most imperialistic nations on earth.—*From an editorial item in The Rutland, Vt., Daily Herald.*

There Goes the Bride

The famous "Here Comes the Bride" wedding march from "Lohengrin" was banned today from all Catholic churches in Oregon as the Most Rev. Edward D. Howard, archbishop of Portland, issued a mandate against "sensuous" music.—*From an International News Service dispatch published in The Cincinnati, O., Times-Star.*

We Won't Take Sides Either

"Actually," he [Sam Cummins] said, a bit apologetically, "'The Love Life of a Gorilla' isn't really a sex-hygiene movie. I call it an educational movie. It tells about those legends in Africa that gorillas sometimes carry off women of a tribe. I don't know whether they are true, but I think people should be educated about them. That's why I call it educational." . . . Another motion picture that Mr. Cummins is preparing for release is called "Maternity." . . . "It idealizes motherhood," he explained, happily. "It is about birth control. It shows that it is wrong for people to have big families if they can't afford them and it also shows that it is wrong to try to regulate nature. It doesn't take sides."—*From an interview with a shoe-string movie promoter, published in The New York World-Telegram.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

CORRESPONDENCE

Housing for Recovery

SIR: The article by George Soule in your November 24 issue on the present industrial depression is interesting, not only because of his discussion of the causes leading to the current recession in business, but also with reference to proposals for its termination.

Not all economists would agree with him on the specific causes of the present recession; some of us would lay more stress on some elements than he has done and less on others. Nearly everyone would agree that the retirement of the federal government from pump-priming is one of the major contributing causes. The trouble was not that the government stopped priming the pump—as it would have to do eventually—but that it stopped so suddenly and precipitously. If it had retired from that field gradually, being careful that the diminution of its contributions to the volume of credit was at a slower rate than the expansion in business financing, then one of the major contributions to the present recession would, I believe, have been eliminated.

Mr. Soule proposes that the funds withdrawn by the social-security taxes be invested in new housing. This is an intriguing proposal. Most economists would agree that if social-security funds were used for the creation of houses or other physical capital they would add to current activity by substantially that amount, whereas if used as they now are simply to reduce the amount of public borrowing, they become a deflationary factor. The further implications of his program, however, that in the future social-security payments would be drawn from the revenue from the houses rather than from current taxation, are very broad, the least of which would be a rather large-scale government participation in the

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business of producing and supplying houses. Ramifications of this are obvious and need not be expounded here. To some of your readers that would be a further cause for supporting Mr. Soule's proposal, while to others it would be an equally valid reason for opposing it strongly.

In any case, action in the housing field has hitherto been almost glacial. Changes in economic conditions in this field have not in the past produced results in building activity until at least a year or two later, and it may be questioned whether Mr. Soule's proposal or others in this field will bring more prompt results. As a remedy for the immediate recession, therefore, I seriously question whether his proposals could get into operation fast enough, or even if they could, whether they would produce sufficiently large a volume of activity to turn the present tide. Much more drastic and immediate steps may be found necessary. As a long-time suggestion for a more rational basis for social security, however, his proposal is a significant contribution.

Washington, D. C. MORDECAI EZEKIEL.

[I did not mean to imply that in the future, social-security payments would be drawn from rental income on the housing, but merely that the housing would be a good investment of the funds, even from a conventional point of view.

I agree that the building would not get under way quickly enough to stem the present recession—provided it is over within a few months. But it may surprise us by longer duration. Of course, it would be quicker to stop collecting taxes for the fund entirely, and adopt the much sounder pay-as-you-go basis.—GEORGE SOULE.]

A Correction from Mr. Baruch

SIR: There has come to my attention a piece written from Washington to the effect that I had taken an interest in the campaign in Arkansas for the election of a Senator to succeed the late Joe T. Robinson. It is neither interesting nor true. I took no part in it whatsoever. And, nobody asked me to.

New York City. BERNARD M. BARUCH.

There Is No Japanese Exclusion Act

SIR: The present tension in the Orient has reproduced a phenomenon that invariably appears whenever any question of political relations between the United States and Japan arises. Always on such occasions certain "liberal" citizens of the United States come forward with apologies for Japan based on her assumedly justifiable irritation with the United States on the basis of allegedly unfair treatment or humiliating discrimination. The basis of this irritation is commonly referred to as "the Japanese Exclusion Law," "Anti-Japanese Legislation," or something of this sort. It is highly important in the interests of international accord that Americans have a clear understanding of the facts in the case.

First of all, it should be emphatically stated and fully understood that there is no Japanese Exclusion Act or even any Japanese exclusion clause in our immigration statutes. . . . The central facts are these:

The first definitely restrictive legislation concerning immigration ever passed in the United States was stimulated by the rising tide of Chinese immigration about the last third of the nineteenth century. . . . The first Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1882, which by subsequent legislation was developed into a permanent system of exclusion. There was thus established the basis of the principle of the exclusion of Orientals from immigration, and also from naturalization. . . .

Early in the nineteenth century a new tide of Oriental immigration began to attain conspicuous proportions—the Japanese. Instead of dealing with this by a new set of exclusion acts, it was determined to handle the matter through diplomatic negotiations, which took the form of the famous Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907. The full provisions of this remarkable arrangement have never been publicly or officially stated, but it is generally understood that in return for some promises by the United States—presumably to refrain from specific exclusion acts—Japan agreed to prevent the migration of Japanese laborers to this country. This was the first and only time that the United States has conceded to any foreign government the right to participate in the regulation of migration between the two countries. It put Japan upon a unique pedestal of recognition.

Under this Gentlemen's Agreement, immigration of Japanese laborers to the United States was administered, till the time came, after the World War, when this country felt it essential to rewrite and codify its entire immigration legislation, including the principle of numerical restriction in applications to all immigration streams except those originating in the Western Hemisphere. In the meantime, practical application of the Gentlemen's Agreement had been much criticized, and Japan had been attacked, justly or unjustly, on the ground of evading the purpose and spirit of the agreement, particularly through the notorious expedient of "picture brides." At any rate, Congress adopted the entirely reasonable and liberal view that it would be much better to deal with the whole problem of Oriental immigration through a single blanket clause of a general character, in which no nation should be specifically mentioned. This provision took the form of excluding from immigration all aliens "ineligible to citizenship in the United States." This is absolutely the entire sum and substance of "Japanese exclusion." . . .

It is thus absolutely clear that there is no discrimination against Japan as such in our immigration legislation, nor has the United States in this respect ever treated Japan with unfairness or prejudice, or given any grounds for humiliation which Japan herself did not erect. On the contrary, our treatment of Japan has been more tender and considerate than that extended to any other Oriental people. The question whether it was wise to exclude non-white peoples from the operation of the quota regulations, and whether it would now be expedient to modify that feature of the law, is a debatable one concerning which valid arguments on both sides might easily be adduced. But it has nothing to do with specific discrimination against the Japanese.

Cannot we get rid, once and for all, of thought and talk about the "Japanese Exclusion Act"?

New York City. HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD.

To Free the Harlan Miners

SIR: The Kentucky Miners' Defense is making a new effort to liberate—before Christmas, 1937—the four Harlan County (Ky.) union miners who are serving life terms on framed-up evidence in the famous Evarts Battle cases of 1931. They were accused of "conspiring to murder" three coal-company mine guards, killed when they attacked a strike picket line with rapid-fire guns.

When our delegation went to Governor A. B. Chandler with new proof of their innocence last December, he said it was "not enough" to convince him. "Bolster up your record, and I'll consider it further."

Well, we *have* bolstered up our record, and we are ready to go to Mr. Chandler with overwhelming evidence that these convictions were obtained through wholesale perjury. We have a sworn confession from the man who framed up Al Benson, and an affidavit also from one of the commonwealth attorneys who participated in other trials, but who refused to serve in the Benson trial because he knew Benson was innocent.

We can show that the perjury was paid for with jobs by mining companies, or was forced by intimidation. Commonwealth witnesses testified to one set of "facts" in one trial, and altered their testimony in later trials to help the prosecution railroad the several defendants to prison.

These men have been behind the bars six and a half years. We need the help of every American who believes in elemental justice to free them. You can help our fight in three ways:

1. Send money at once to the Kentucky Miners' Defense, 75 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

2. Write to Governor A. B. Chandler, Executive Mansion, Frankfort, Kentucky, appealing to him to grant unconditional pardons to W. B. Jones, Chester Poore, Jim Reynolds and Al Benson, on the ground that they were unjustly convicted.

3. Write to United States Senator Robert M. La Follette, Washington, D. C., urging him to extend the investigation of Harlan by his committee to include the 1931-32 framed-up murder trials.

HERBERT MAHLER, Secretary-Treasurer,
New York City. Kentucky Miners' Defense.

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The Elkland Strikers

SIR: The New Republic has already brought word of the situation of the Tannery Workers in Elkland, Pennsylvania, to its readers. This letter is to remind them that the struggle is still being carried on. It is a battle which has significance for the workers in similar small one-industry towns throughout eastern Pennsylvania and western New York. Time, as always, is on the side of the company. The National Labor Relations Board will hold its hearing within the next few months, but a few weeks of bitter cold added to unemployment can become potent factors even when workers know their freedom from continuous peonage is involved.

Resources of union members of the National Leather Workers' Association are strained to the utmost to provide food for the strikers in Elkland. Those resources cannot be stretched to cover the purchase of coal and for lack of a few tons of coal each week until the Labor Board hearing, the battle could be lost. To those Americans who have fallen into the habit of historical revolutionary comparisons, I might say that Elkland is another Valley Forge. But without resorting to such an artificial stimulus to patriotic tradition, I want to urge all who can send money now to the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City, so that coal may be purchased for those who are fighting an entrenched peonage in America and whose victory will embolden many thousands of workers in the area to establish workers' rights in their own communities.

MARY FOX, Executive Secretary,
New York City. League for Industrial Democracy.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Katharine Dunn of New York City writes of the investigation the New York League of Woman Shoppers has been making into the Spotless Cleaners' strike which led to its support of the strikers. The dispute is important because it shows the interrelated interests of worker and consumer and the ineffectuality of the National Labor Relations Board to deal with the determined opposition of Louis Denberg, head of the company. . . . Theodora Pikowsky of Chicago thinks that The New Republic's editorial on the private boycott of Japanese goods in the November 24 issue presented an unduly pessimistic viewpoint about the success of its application. . . . Miriam Bogorad, administrative secretary of the American Congress, New York City, calls the attention of our readers to the "peace propaganda" Christmas cards the organization is selling to help finance its peace activities.

Charles Flagg of Washington, D. C., disagrees with the statement in Catherine Bauer's article on the Housing Act (September 8) that the "provision that every project must include demolition, condemnation or repair of dwellings approximately equal to those constructed" is an indefensible restriction. Mr. Flagg thinks that the old slum dwellings will offer competition with the new homes; that vacant new houses will be a greater deterrent to the progress of the housing program than any other single factor; that the ultimate aim of the Act should be the abolition of buildings unfit for use; that the provision therefore is a wise one. . . . Agnes Sailer, extension director of Pioneer Youth of America, 219 West Twenty-ninth Street, New York City, urges that readers contribute to the Christmas fund for sharecroppers' children of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, 2527 Broad Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee.

Mrs. Esther J. Mohr of Chicago tells us of the formation there of a branch of the League of Women Shoppers, a fact that has failed to receive any publicity in the daily press. She urges interested readers to communicate with the organization's secretary, Mrs. Jessie Lloyd O'Connor, 455 Birch Street, Winnetka, Illinois. . . . Katherine B. Paty of Bell Buckle, Tennessee, writing about Willard Price's article, "Japan's 'Divine Mission'" (November 17), feels that it neglects to stress the fact that Japanese mythology is being used as a propaganda tool of the military class. We have explained the purpose of Mr. Price's article in an editorial "The New Masses Is Hurt" (December 8), written after Miss Paty had mailed her communication.

Ferner Nuhn of Cedar Falls, Iowa, writes in favor of The New Republic's neutrality policy, and makes two special points he regards as especially important. First, that "collective world action" at present comes down to but one thing, Anglo-American solidarity. Second, that since there is no real collective instrumentality, the Japanese would correctly interpret our intervention in Asia as plain old power-rivalry. . . . John Switalski of Chicago thinks that Otis Ferguson will regret his review of James Farrell in the November 10 issue. Farrell, in Mr. Switalski's opinion, has made the most significant contribution to American literature since "Moby Dick" and "Leaves of Grass."

NEW MEXICO WRITERS

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in The NEW MEXICO SENTINEL

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What's on the Air?

Charles P. Taft II and Walter Laves, director of the Midwest office of the League of Nations Association, discuss "Farm Problems and Foreign Policy" under the auspices of the University Broadcasting Council of Chicago, Saturday, December 11, 12:15 P.M., CBS.

A member of the House of Representatives discusses "Current Questions before the House," Monday, December 13, 4:50 P.M., CBS.

Dr. Lee Schwartz of Beth Israel Hospital speaks on "Facts and Fallacies on Sinus Trouble," Wednesday, December 15, 3:45 P.M., CBS.

William Gropper, Jerome Klein and Mrs. Juliana Force are interviewed on a program from the American Artists' Congress, Wednesday, December 15, 10:45 P.M., CBS.

Musical programs of the week include "La Traviata" by the Metropolitan Opera Company, Saturday, December 11, 1:55 to 5 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; The Philharmonic Symphony-Society of New York, Sunday, December 12, 3 P.M., CBS; the Rochester Civic Orchestra, Monday, December 13, 3 to 4 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; the third act of "Tristan and Isolde" by the Chicago Civic Opera Company, Monday, December 13, at 11:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; and Christmas carols by the Barnard College and Columbia University Glee Clubs, Tuesday, December 14, 1:15 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard Time.

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Fun into Fundamentals

The Folklore of Capitalism, by Thurman W. Arnold. New Haven: Yale University Press. 407 pages. $3.

BACK IN 1921 when the Wyoming legislature convened, the victorious majority party—Republican of course—went through the customary tribal ceremony of "picking" a head man. First there was a long speech nominating the already selected speaker. Next there was another long speech seconding the nomination. Then the speaker-to-be made a third long speech, of surprised but gratified acceptance. Now it happened that one lone Democrat had survived the Harding landslide. And at the apparent conclusion of the ritual, he rose and gravely made a long speech nominating an undisclosed peer-among-statesmen to lead the minority. Then he sat down, rose again, and made a long seconding speech. Finally he sat down, rose a third time, and fairly beamed his acceptance of the job. The lone Democrat was Thurman Arnold of Laramie.

Mr. Arnold has been poking kindly fun at our more solemn native folkways and folklore ever since. He does it regularly, to the delight and frequent bewilderment of his law-consecrated students, in his classes at the Yale Law School. He did it two years ago, with more flair than finish, in a book called "The Symbols of Government." Last year, as a special assistant attorney-general for the New Deal, he could not resist doing it, with appropriate restraint, in his arguments before the Supreme Court. Now, in "The Folklore of Capitalism," he pulls out all the stops and rings (if you don't mind skipping from organ to bells) all the changes, in working his *leit-motif* of fun-poking into a symphonic, brilliant and brand-new political philosophy.

A reviewer always has a better time when he's panning than when he's praising. I can't help that. I go the whole hog for "The Folklore of Capitalism." Bluntly, I think it's a great book.

In the first place, it makes grand reading. No one I know can grab abstractions out of the air and pin them down to earth with familiar, homely examples so dexterously as Mr. Arnold. If you need a teaser, read the parable of the horse and the duck (page 180, if you pick it up in a bookstore), which is at the same time the funniest and the most devastating comment on legal reasoning I have ever come across. Then, too, throughout the book Mr. Arnold keeps taking down every respectable pair of intellectual pants he can lay his hands on. Now it's a cinch to play hob with the intoned inanities of an American Bar Association president or the messianic mutterings of a Dorothy Thompson. Alfred Sloan, Herbert Hoover, Walter Lippmann, Alf Landon, and the editorials of The New York Times all fall in the same easy-mark category. But you've got to be good to take, for instance, pseudo-hardboiled Westbrook Pegler at his toughest and make a sissy out of him. Mr. Arnold calls Mr. Pegler a naïve preacher, and proves it.

Yet "The Folklore of Capitalism" is in no sense a destructive job, and therein lies, to my mind, its greatness. Mr. Arnold never gets sore about the men who chant folderol, nor about the folderol, nor about the public that swallows it. In the full sense of the word, he *accepts* all this—as part of the inevitable folklore of the times. And out of that acceptance he has fashioned a political attitude which is startlingly constructive and tolerant and wise. The wonder is it hasn't been thought of before.

It is the attitude of the perceiving, and sometimes partaking, observer—the psychiatrist toward his patient, the anthropologist toward a primitive tribe, the intelligent man from Mars. Our governmental and economic principles, says Mr. Arnold (and our devious methods of expressing them, twisting them, and often ignoring them in action), are no more than the symbols of a necessary social religion. We need our faiths and our rituals, even where they conflict with or impede our ways of getting practical things done. The trouble is that intelligent folk take them all too literally. They expect what we say to fit with what we do, whereas any psychologist, dealing with a single individual, knows better. So too with men in the mass: our words and beliefs do not guide our actions; they are part of our actions. And only through realization and acceptance of this fact can intellectual or political leaders ever hope to use and change and manipulate the symbols toward the achievement of humanitarian ends. Thus radicals and "realists" all fall into the error of taking the symbols at their face value, and end up by ranting futilely against human hypocrisy and stupidity. Naïve is what Mr. Arnold calls them, and the more I think about it the more I am convinced that Mr. Arnold is right.

As a matter of fact I see the Arnold approach as the rallying-post of that wandering herd of lost left-wing liberals "somewhere between Roosevelt and Stalin"—disgusted with the present workings of the capitalist system, aware of the ineffective pallor of intellectual socialism, yet unable to stomach the doctrinaire rigidity of the Communist line. I have heard one of that lost herd call Mr. Arnold's book the greatest contribution to political thinking since Marx. Personally, I think Mr. Arnold has his fingers on something miles ahead of Marx—in maturity, acceptability and, especially, present usefulness. Hell—go read "The Folklore of Capitalism" and see for yourself. FRED RODELL.

Surveyor's Report

Japan over Asia, by William Henry Chamberlin. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 407 pages. $3.50.

CHAMBERLIN over Japan would have been an equally good title. For Mr. Chamberlin lets himself range over almost every aspect of Japanese life and every Japanese question internal and external. He takes in his stride the Japanese army colonel in Manchukuo, the textile exporter underselling the British in India and the Dutch in Java, the ministry of finance struggling with 50-percent deficits, admirals brooding on the British flag flying over Singapore, the student listening to Beethoven in cafés and the peasant sinking under the burden of crop-rent and rice-dealers' exactions. In less than four hundred pages he includes an astonishing amount of information on Japan just before it went to war.

There is no central idea, no scheme within which facts are grouped, no structure in which phenomena are scaled in importance. Mr. Chamberlin chooses rather to be descriptive, making judgments and evaluations as he passes, judgments as to single facts and with particular criteria. He is interested in telling what is, rather than why and what it means as measured against general ideas. It is an extensive and comprehensive job rather than an analytical one. But Mr. Chamberlin is hardly to be criticized for not doing what he did not intend to do.

For the general reader it is indeed a useful book. Here are the main facts of Japan's bid for world supremacy, military, political and economic. Its advance northward through Manchukuo toward the Soviet Union, its advance westward into China, the threatened advance southward toward the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies and British

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Malaya, are all sketched in quickly and clearly. The main facts of Japan's commercial invasion of the markets of the world are deftly chosen and neatly summarized. There is a general though not very deep summary of the main issues between Japan on the one hand and Great Britain and America on the other. There is a chapter on China's nationalistic revival and consequent resistance to Japanese aggression. The opposition of army and big business within Japan is adequately treated, followed by a good chapter on Japan's semi-fascist system. Something is given of Japan's economic dilemma and a concluding chapter asks how strong Japan is, balances strength against weakness, but does not answer.

The book was written before the war with China broke out and was touched up here and there at the last minute to take account of the outbreak of the war. But it is far from dated, since it is a good treatment of Far Eastern background which will serve until after the war is ended. And again I say it gives a more comprehensive view of that background than any other recent book. It gives more ground, that is, rather than going beneath the surface. It is an excellent book, therefore, for one who has not read much about the Far East. It gives both sides of every question opened up and, if not very conclusive, it at least tells what the opposing arguments are. It is a balanced, middle-of-the-road view, common sense rather than original insight or creative analysis. The deeper questions raised by any consideration of Japanese fundamentals as related to Japan's place in the Western system, or of the contemporary social system as reflected in an Oriental society newly embraced within it—these are scarcely touched and sometimes perhaps unrecognized. But the questions dealt with are treated soundly, fairly and with singular tolerance for a book on Japan.

NATHANIEL PEFFER.

The Architectural Highway

Architecture and Modern Life, by Baker Brownell and Frank Lloyd Wright. New York: Harper and Brothers. 360 pages, illustrated. $4.

IT IS difficult to extract the essence of this contrapuntal book written by a fine student of the social scene and by a great architect. In a sense, for American architecture, it takes up where Dr. Behrendt leaves off, takes apart our immediate life and architecture and shows the internal stresses and strains, looks into the future as it exists in this present. Brownell is the comprehending analyst; between his brilliantly illuminating chapters comes the voice of Frank Lloyd Wright like the diapason of an organ, saying "this is what should be: this is what can be."

What should be and can be if only we turn from a way of living that is disintegrating and destructive to a way that again places emphasis on the dignity of the human being. "The structure of society is horizontal in contrast to the older vertical society: personal life is pluralistic rather than monistic, explicit and external rather than implicit; human action is specialized with sharp cleavage between productive activities and consuming activities in contrast to the integrity of life of our fathers. . . . Most of the expressive architecture of these times is the architecture of society *triumphant over human life.*"

It is for the architect to restore human life to its proper integrity, because in a large measure architecture conditions life: we move in patterns of cities and in patterns of buildings which are architecture, good or bad. Architecture is not only esthetic, not only utilitarian, it is kinesthetic, and the ways in which it forces us to go, to turn, to climb up or walk out or sit down habituate muscular and mental reflexes that affect our thought and our action. Anyone who has lived in a spacious house, who has entered a great church, or has visited Taliesin will know what that means.

If Brownell has taken us along the varied U.S. Art Highway showing us the "power and fluidity" of modern life, if Wright has, from the deep creativeness of himself, shown another way and better way, neither has answered the fundamental "how." The present capitalistic system has produced what we have; fascism is the negation of all the spiritual values and free expression in which life and art are rooted; communism is, like Christianity, merely another postponement to a future instead of a realization in the present—the hoped-for State instead of Heaven. The implication is some form of distributism, achieved somehow by hope and desire.

It is characteristic of Wright that he only affirms, envisages without being able to inform. Creation cannot be taught or transmitted. In Broadacre City he reveals the physical pattern of things hoped for in an organic world providing an integrated life. Like the Garden Cities of Ebenezer Howard, Broadacre City is nearer to reality than the utopias of the intellectuals: it is not based on reason or logic, only on a wish to see man make the most of himself. Whether man is not already too far sunk in the slough of economic despond is another question. If all had the gift of creating beauty and order, as Wright has alone among architects today, the question would not have to be asked.

HENRY S. CHURCHILL.

A Way of Life

The Importance of Living, by Lin Yutang. New York: The John Day Company-Reynal and Hitchcock. 475 pages. $3.

MR. LIN describes his present book as "a personal guide to enjoyment." As such it is a more didactic and calculated treatise than "My Country and My People" and lacks something of the spontaneous charm of the latter. It is too long, and somewhat overwritten. The criticism of American behavior, so blandly and innocently introduced in "My Country and My People," becomes obvious and captious. Mr. Lin rails against the American habits of punctuality, of answering letters, of lifting hats and shaking hands. After all, how can one enjoy an occasion if one is not present? A substantial element in the enjoyment of life for many people is the communication of experience by letter, and if no one answered letters few would be received. And how much vicarious enjoyment would the world have missed without Madame de Sévigné, Horace Walpole and Madame du Deffand, Jane Austen, Charles Lamb and Mrs. Carlyle? As for shaking the hand of another instead of one's own, Mr. Lin might find a thrill in this permissible bodily contact with the right person, and remember Browning's lines to his Lost Mistress:

> I may hold your hand but as long as all may,
> Or so very little longer . . .

It is necessary to call attention to these lapses because they mar the fine surface of Mr. Lin's exposition, and suggest a yielding to the American idea of efficiency through what Meredith called "sheer longinquity," or an assumption of the cheap wit, practised for our edification by the late Chinese Minister, Mr. Wu Ting-fang. For the rest, Mr. Lin has written a wise and beautiful book, setting forth

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the way of life of the enlightened pagan. He is in a peculiarly favorable position to do this by virtue of his bringing up in a Christian family and school, something that gives him enough perspective to see Chinese culture in its large aspects. Moreover, coming to this culture with a mind fresh and open, undulled by the pedantry of the schools, he is able to share his enthusiasm with his readers.

Mr. Lin marks the two great forms of Chinese thought, Taoism and Confucianism, the one a philosophy of the natural vagabond, "Nature's gentleman," the other, the philosophy of "Society's gentleman." He confesses himself a devotee of the Half-and-Half, of the golden mean, of the balance between action and inaction. In the main he falls back on the doctrine of "animal faith" as opposed to intellectualism, as set forth by Thoreau, Whitman, Santayana and William James. The brain is not primarily for thinking but for preserving life by collaboration with the sensory apparatus. Least of all is it a receptacle of information. He quotes Confucius in accord with contemporary educational tendencies: "Thinking without learning makes one flighty, and learning without thinking is disaster."

In regard to art, poetry and religion, Mr. Lin sees their only reason for being in that "they tend to restore in us a freshness of vision and a more emotional glamor and a more vital sense of life." His commendation of Chinese culture, as seen in food, furniture, clothing, medicine, travel, games, arrangement of flowers, interior decoration and landscape gardening, is a needed reminder of the elemental values of living. Of special interest is his constant recourse to the authority of literature, the great tradition of Chinese philosophy and poetry. At a time when scientists, for example Professor Hooton and Dr. Carrel, are raising the question whether civilized life is not fatal to humanity by its negation of the biological processes according to which man has survived and evolved, it is fitting to look for enlightenment to the civilization which has shown greatest aptitude for survival. Mr. Lin is irritated by the constant talk in China about "our national salvation," and protests: "Everybody is trying to 'save' China." His book provides the strongest reason for hope the "everybody" may be successful.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

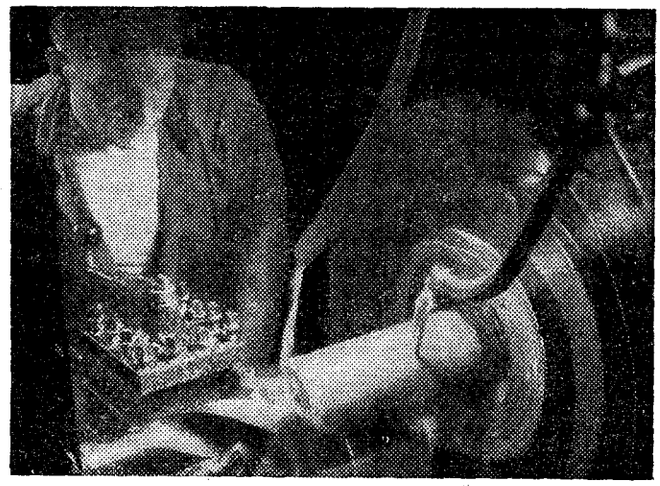
Washington Dateline

The Washington Correspondents, by Leo C. Rosten. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 456 pages. $3.

FOR YEARS the leaders of left-wing movements have complained that the newspapers did not tell the truth about Washington. For years the publishers have replied smugly that, whatever attitude was taken on their editorial pages, their news columns were unbiased. Lack of bias in the presentation of news, they said, was the glory of the American press.

Mr. Rosten has succeeded in putting the bee on them. Coming to Washington with a grant from the Social Science Research Council, he spent sixteen months in asking 127 Washington correspondents innumerable questions. After the correspondents grew to know and respect him, he persuaded them to fill out two confidential questionnaires. Six of his queries, framed in the correspondents' own words, together with their answers, demand quotation:

> "Are the news columns equally fair to big business and labor?" Yes, 43.8 percent; no, 48.5 percent. "Comparatively few papers give significant accounts of our basic economic conflicts?" Yes, 86.6 percent; no, 11.4 percent. "The publishers' cry of 'freedom of the press' in



What Makes the Wheels Go Round?

WHEELS that grind flour for our bread, saw lumber for our houses, shape steel for our automobiles; that weave cloth for our coats and dresses, make our paper, print out newspapers. Wheels on which we depend for the everyday necessities and comforts of life. What makes these wheels go round?

Today the answer is electricity. Electricity has speeded up the operations of all industry, has enabled it to produce — in millions instead of hundreds — the manufactured products that we need. Electricity has reduced the cost of these products so that the average person can now afford those things which only the rich could enjoy a few years ago.

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fighting the NRA code was a ruse?" Yes, 63.8 percent; no, 24.7 percent. "Most papers printed unfair or distorted stories about the Tugwell Pure Food Bill?" Yes, 46.2 percent; no, 21.6 percent. "Correspondents try too hard to please their editors. If they had more independence, they would discover they really have more freedom than they assume?" Yes, 60.8 percent; no, 28.3 percent. "In my experience I've had stories played down, cut or killed for 'policy' reasons." Yes, 55.5 percent; no, 41.6 percent. (The percentages fail to total 100 because of the varying number of correspondents who were unwilling to return flat answers.)

Here is substantial proof either that correspondents themselves have distorted the news, or that it has been distorted in their home offices. No better witnesses could be wished for. These correspondents write the major part of the national political news that every one of us reads. They are testifying about their own handiwork. Let the American Newspaper Publishers' Association try to talk its way out of this one.

The reviewer, however, would himself be guilty of distortion if he implied that Mr. Rosten's book is primarily an indictment. It is not. It is a shining example of the wonders and beauties of modern sociological analysis. Mr. Rosten gives you the divorce rate among Washington correspondents, and what its significance is in terms of their political leanings, and why 26.8 percent regularly read The New Republic. The book is most readily comparable to the two "Middletowns" of the Lynds, and Mr. Rosten is, if anything, more dexterous in his psychological interpretation. It is one of the best books on Washington correspondents ever written; it is one of the best descriptive and interpretative accounts of a group of men anywhere.

The final chapter, unhappily, goes slightly askew. Mr. Rosten sets himself the task of finding out what can be done to reform Washington reporting. He decides, correctly enough, that the principal fault lies not with the correspondents, but with the publishers—who up to this point have scarcely entered the conversation. In a wild lunge, he suggests the publishers be licensed, apparently by the state—although he is not clear on this point—and buttresses himself by a brief paragraph from Mr. William Allen White. As most readers know, Mr. Rosten is responsible for the educational progress of H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N, and we suspect that even Mr. K*A*P*L*A*N, on second thought, would question the wisdom of a state-licensed press in a capitalist economy. But it is a large question Mr. Rosten raises. No one has a ready answer, and under our present social arrangements we are likely to be a long time searching for one.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

40 East 49th Street New York, N. Y.

Bad Cess to You, Tom Moore

The Minstrel Boy: A Portrait of Tom Moore, by L. A. G. Strong. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 330 pages. $3.75.

The Harp That Once: Tom Moore and the Regency Period, by Howard Mumford Jones. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 381 pages. $3.50.

TWO BIOGRAPHIES of Moore within the same month leave the reviewer, like Dr. Johnson after the performing dog—not so much surprised that it has been so well done as astonished that it should ever have been done at all. It is now one hundred and thirty years since Tom Moore made his bid for fame among the English poets by getting himself attacked in The Edinburgh Review. Byron was in his teens, Shelley was learning atheism, Keats was a child. In an age of mediocre poets Tom Moore was at least an Irishman—a man with a cause. His combination of the contemporary rhetoric with Restoration eroticism and Ireland's woes was irresistible. He was the first blarney-charmer; Kathleen's first first-rate pimp to the heart of Empire; the first Anglo-Irishman to exploit his country's slavery as literary copy for the delectation of the London drawing-rooms. In his lifetime his fame went worldwide. Both biographers quote Luttrell's complimentary quatrain:

> I'm told, dear Moore, your lays are sung,
> (Can it be true, you lucky man?)
> By moonlight, in the Persian tongue,
> Along the streets of Ispahan.

Shelley, of course, was taken in and grew up to gush something about Tommy Moore being the sweetest lyrist of Ierne's saddest wrong; but Byron, with his great good sense, contented himself with liking the man and remarking that "he dearly loved a lord" (in Ireland that remark has been Moore's epitaph).

Being himself an Irishman, Mr. Strong opens his biography with some expression of apology for his subject: "Tom Moore was not a great man or a great poet, but he has many titles to attention." Mr. Jones, being a scholar, plunges into his facts with all the confidence of a don who knows them. To him the period is more interesting than the poet; to Mr. Strong the poetry is less interesting than the personality. The books are supplementary in their virtues and identical in their failing: the one being a warmly written account of a person of minor importance; the other building a mountain of facts upon a mouse. If the reader thinks that Tom Moore is worth a book, he will have to read two books. Otherwise he can go on singing or hearing the "Irish Melodies," though the author remains no more than a name with a vague undertone of disgrace.

On the whole, Mr. Strong is the more cautious and the more readable biographer, though Mr. Jones is the better historian. Both agree to the importance of Moore as a precursor of the Celtic Revival of Yeats and AE: Mr. Jones chiding the "ungrateful moderns" who have forgotten that "long before the Celtic twilight became a fad, the dapper little singer was preparing the way . . ." and Mr. Strong declaring "his songs were symbols of what was to come . . . they were Irish; they were Ireland." Saying this, and oversaying it, the biographers have said their utmost in defense of the little poet who began by being the friend of the revolutionary Robert Emmet and ended by having his memoirs edited by an English Prime Minister.

MICHAEL SAYERS.

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Light of Israel

The Buried Candelabrum, by Stefan Zweig. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

THIS IS Stefan Zweig's version of the legend of the Menorah, the seven-branched candlestick that was pillaged from Jerusalem in antiquity and for long periods kept by conquerors in Babylon, Rome, Carthage, Byzantium. Zweig's story is laid in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., and his central character is Benjamin Marnefesh ("the sorely tried"), whose destiny is involved even more closely than the rest of his people with the sacred lampstand of Moses. As a very old man Benjamin fulfills his consecrated purpose, not in the material way he had first hoped, but in a way that lets him, the sorely tried, die tranquilly in the Holy Land.

Zweig had good materials to work with, particularly the historical parallels which don't have to be forced (so there is no need to give some Roman emperor Mussolini's jaw—etc.), and the excellent symbol already invested with religious meanings and also suggesting the integrity, persistence of faith and stubborn courage that have given the Jews their identity down the centuries. Creating a story out of this material he makes it for the most part as simple as fables should be, usually filling it in just enough, and only once in a while giving it the special touch of the novelist.

All the people are generalized except Benjamin, who is faintly individualized, so that the story has a human center: his frailties of occasional doubt and timidity, seen against the inherited virtues, give his heroism a special value at the last. The story isn't what might be called exciting, and there is little trace of the author of "Amok." The tumult and change of the Decline are seen as through patient rabbinical eyes. It is regrettable that the distinguished translators bring so many inverted sentences across: such expressions as "How tiny felt the little boy beneath the vast expanse of heaven" are awkward and even ridiculous English.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE.

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Art and Gift

THE SUPERLATIVE art (and gift) (and science) book of the year is Audubon's "The Birds of America," reviewed here last week (Macmillan, $12.50). But when you come down to what almost anybody can afford, the most gift for the money is "Woollcott's Second Reader," 1,060 pages in a pleasant stout binding, for $3 (Viking). This is a little less finicky than the first one, and neither precious nor out-of-the-way. The Hemingway and Dorothy Parker stories are not beyond literary memory yet; neither is Maugham's "Cakes and Ale"; even I can remember "All Kneeling," by Anne Parrish; and on the whole I think I've already heard enough about Clarence Day's family (here the selection is "God and My Father").

However, Mr. Woollcott is not pitting himself against the specialized or thoroughly read reviewer. He is too canny for categorical superlatives. He is addressing thousands of readers, and he tells them, Here are some things that I do like and you may. So there is something from Kenneth Grahame's "The Golden Age," from Edith Wharton and Willa Cather. A piece of R. L. Stevenson, a study from Bolitho's "Murder for Profit," a preface from "All Men Are Brothers" (translation), some of Stephen Crane's Whilomville Stories and a brilliant mean portrait by D. H. Lawrence—twenty-one authors, eight complete books . . . four rare essays, etc., as the jacket says. The basic fact is that here is a lot of readable stuff that few know all about and many know little about.

On the art side there is a fine book for those at all interested, in Carl Zigrosser's "Six Centuries of Fine Prints" (Covici-Friede; $5). It reproduces 488 prints of all kinds, arranged chronologically, the first one dated 1467—everything from the most primitive extant woodcut or engraving on to color stencils, aquatints, etchings by great painters and etched reproductions of great paintings. The book is no helter-skelter catch-all; there are 195 pages of text in which this authority explains process and development and, best of all, works out his thesis. Like printing, he says, the art of print-making has been nearest of all plastic arts to the people and the times. Not only the familiar details of street life and husbandry, morals and manners, but the attitudes toward these things. You will find a surprising amount of gritty satire—political, social, esthetic. And "Chinese Sage" (plate 111; date 1740), for example, would look very ultra in next week's New Yorker, with some of the flowing beauty tamed down, of course, and a run-around of text. And it is hard to remember that those dark and blasted figures of the Goya aquatints were not pulled at Oviedo, c. 1937. Read from word to picture, and back again, this book is one of the few that open the mind to what art is and what it should be, how it grew and how, like the hard biological law of survival, it must keep on growing.

There is a much prettier book—the word shouldn't really be pretty because it is a handsome job of printing, color reproduction, binding and publisher's imagination—in the Random House reprint of "Hajji Baba," by James Morter (448 pages, 28 full-page color illustrations and innumerable sketches by Cyrus Leroy Baldridge; $3.50). It is one of those romantic-fantastic tales that were better known to and appreciated by our great-grandfathers and even our fathers, provided they could read and write, than it will be to us—all about the humorous and swashing adventures, through perils and bedchambers in Persia, of the now mythical son of a once famous barber. Ticket this one as a special; to be more than simple ostentation as a gift, it has to be sent to the right person.

Photography having finally been established as an art, and having attracted so many thousands of amateur practitioners, there is always a gift quality lurking in yearly collections ("U. S. Camera: 1937" and the "Leica Annual"). Just now there is a book in the form of a box of prints, a little less than folio size, "Modern Masters of Photography," edited by Heyworth Campbell. (The Galleon Press, $3.) The idea is a new one, a sort of dedication to the art of photography, intended for quarterly publication. Some of the pictures seem on the slick side, some have been lighted and trick-developed so that there is a curious resemblance to things which photography is not, painting, etching, etc. But there are a lot of good things; and there are sure to be enough sheets for any man's taste, suitable for framing.

"The New Yorker Album" needs no introduction here, but is going to get it just the same. It is to be given to (1) people who have followed The New Yorker cartoons through the year; (2) to people who haven't read The New Yorker, but should have, for this is the peak of cartoon art, surely the finest collection of satirists, funny men, social observers and Thurber screwballs that was ever collected. Always remember that The New Yorker is less blessed in Arno than in Steig, that Thurber tops Blake for sheer jump of fancy, that Helen Hokinson's ladies are good for a laugh only until you look behind them, as she must have in their creation, that one Gluyas Williams mural for a political convention will say more and say it better than any fifty of the cartoons that have to be studded with tags—John Bull, the Nazi Dragon, The Toiling Galahad—signed by Low, and distributed to a special audience of Students of Foreign Affairs.

OTIS FERGUSON.

Contributors

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE is a well known Kansas editor and writer. After an inquiry among our readers last year, we found that he was one of the very few American liberals who voted for Landon.

LOUISE SAUNDERS is the author of two books of plays, "The Knave of Hearts" and "Magic Lantern," and has contributed short stories and poems to various periodicals.

HENRI LEFEBVRE is a French teacher and journalist, a frequent contributor to La Nouvelle Revue Française. He has been active in the People's Front.

KENNETH BURKE is the author of several books, including "Permanence and Change" and "Attitudes Toward History," both published in The New Republic Dollar Series.

FRED RODELL is a member of the faculty of Yale University and, during his present leave of absence, is working on the editorial staff of Fortune.

NATHANIEL PEFFER, the author of several books on the Far East, returned from China in the fall to take a teaching position at Coumbia University.

HENRY S. CHURCHILL is a member of the American Institute of Architects who was associated with the Greenbrook Project of the Resettlement Administration. He is now in private practice in New York City.

JONATHAN MITCHELL, who is well known to readers of The New Republic for his articles on politics and current affairs, lives in Washington, D. C.

MICHAEL SAYERS was dramatic critic of A. R. Orage's New English Weekly. His short stories have appeared in "Best British Short Stories." He has been working as a play reader for Norman Bel Geddes.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE is literary editor of The Beacon, Chicago's liberal magazine.

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